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Market Town Welcome

Destination Plan for Amble

REPORT TO

One NorthEast, Northumberland Strategic Partnership and
Northumberland Tourism

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Report From



In Partnership With



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Executive Summary

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

Amble will develop its tourism potential and strengthen its identity for visitors by promoting its unique selling point as a harbour town.

The Vision for Amble as a visitor destination is:

- By 2018 Amble will be a vibrant, lively, welcoming town that is proud of its social, industrial and maritime history.
- The harbour area and marina will be key to the visitor experience of Amble. The town will be recognised for its rich heritage, and visitors will enjoy seeing important parts of this history, such as the harbour and the newly developed heritage centre.
- Amble will attract a diverse range of national and international visitors including active holiday makers, birdwatchers, walkers, yachting people and families.

The aims of this destination plan are:

1. To strengthen Amble's identity and profile as an attractive visitor destination.
2. To broaden Amble's visitor market and attract higher spending visitors, to complement the more traditional budget holiday market which will continue to be an important part of the visitor economy.
3. To establish Amble as a year round destination encouraging short breaks throughout the year.
4. To develop a sustainable visitor economy offering excellent service, customer care and value for money.
5. To increase visitor satisfaction levels which will encourage repeat visits and recommendations.
6. To better promote and enable visitors to enjoy the natural and built heritage in and around Amble.
7. To widen the range and improve the quality of the retail and food and drink offers in the town.
8. To encourage more visitors to walk, cycle and use public transport.

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

The Strategy

The strategy is to focus on Amble's strengths and unique selling points and to develop and promote these to meet the expectations of more upmarket visitor segments. Amble 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. There is a need to build confidence in the visitor economy that Amble **will** attract more upmarket sectors and **will** become a more desirable destination 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.

Amble Destination Priorities

1. **Maximising the tourism opportunities of local beaches and the marina**

The Marina and local beaches are fundamental draws that Amble has to offer visitors to the town. The working port and fishing industry are also important to Amble. Sailing, and to a lesser extent diving and sea-kayaking could be marketed much more effectively if Amble had the services and infrastructure to support these activities. Whilst the Marina has already been described as Amble's "floating hotel" there is an appreciation locally that the town is deficient in a number of vital aspects, including food and drink establishments and retail as well as facilities such as an adequate public slip-way and designated areas for specialist water-sports.

2. **Enhancing the aesthetics of the town centre, harbour and Queen Street**

The Leadership Group felt that the tourism potential of the town is significantly undermined by the relatively poor physical appearance of a number of key areas. This is an issue that was also highlighted by the retail distinctiveness study. Both the town centre and harbour approaches could be improved significantly through relatively small-scale and inexpensive interventions and actions that could be achieved in a short space of time.

3. **Improving the quality of the Food and Drink offer**

There are opportunities for improving both the retail and food and drink offer through encouraging shops to sell fresh fruit, vegetables and seafood, and developing more local food and drink market stalls. Existing cafes, restaurants and pubs could upgrade their food

offer, promote their local sourcing and recipes and ensure that the quality of the service is excellent. The need for at least one good quality restaurant and a family-friendly 'foody' pub has been identified. Speciality food retailers could add additional services for visitors such as gift wrapping, postage home and mail order for future orders.

4. Supporting and broadening the local tourism economy

There are a number of areas that need to be developed in order to secure Amble's future as a tourism destination. As with many tourism destinations, Amble is affected by the seasonal nature of the industry. However, many within the town felt that the seasonality in the town is not as extreme as in other destinations, and could be even less so if the town was to further promote a range of water-based activities and all-weather services, whilst enhancing retail, food and drink and accommodation provision. Developments are needed in the town so that it becomes more of a year round destination with the support and provision that visitors are looking for.

5. Car Parking, Signage and Traffic Management

The town audit revealed some significant issues with regard to directional signage on entering Amble along with some parking management problems. The town identified the need for a comprehensive traffic management plan which would clearly identify the issues, the causes and solutions that suit the needs of visitors, local people and businesses. Options included allocating a designated coach parking area and implementing improvements to the entrance of the car park.

6. Marketing and Promotions

Marketing will bring all the strengths of the town together to communicate messages to target markets. Simple improvements can be made to ensure websites are promoting Amble in a co-ordinated way with common messages. Events need better promotion as these can raise the town's profile significantly. There is scope for trialling specific promotions targeting key segments in nearby cities for short breaks and joint promotions with other Northumberland towns.

The main identity or messages for promotion that the town would like to use in future marketing and promotion work is around the concept that there are a number of things to see and do in and around Amble.

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, watersports 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 Management Plan (DMP) for Amble is an action plan for the whole partnership of organisations that are involved in delivering the visitor experience within Amble 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's purpose is to:

- help develop the tourism potential of Amble 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 to the Project

Miller Research in partnership with Alison Caffyn Research 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: Berwick, Alnwick, Amble, Haltwhistle, Seahouses, and Wooler. All the towns except Berwick have recently conducted a study into developing their retail distinctiveness and competitiveness. This work highlighted the growing importance of tourism to each town, and the destination plans now aim to complement the retail work and highlight the towns' tourism potential.

It is important to focus on tourism as the visitor economy has become, and will continue to be, one of the most important sectors particularly for rural areas. The tourism sector employs a high proportion of local people and contributes 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**.
- Overnight visitors spent £248million, day visitors spent a further £142 million, plus indirect revenue of £228 million giving a total 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.

Tourism not only supports businesses, jobs and suppliers but it is particularly significant in rural areas and market towns where there are fewer 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.
- 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 visitors. It highlights the potential for making more of regional food, improved shopping and public art as well as basics such as visitor information and signage. 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 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 particular challenges for Northumberland, such as 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 objectives including developing a higher profile for Northumberland, encouraging new sustainable tourism businesses and a more entrepreneurial culture which will help increase jobs, skills, investment and safeguard local services such as shops, pubs, museums etc.

1.3. Process and Partnership

The team researched good practice from amongst other UK regions and market towns to identify the best way to develop a market town destination plan. A template or process was developed which aimed to be as inclusive as possible by developing a local leadership group in each town which involved tourism businesses and local organisations as well as the town development trusts, local authorities and tourism agencies. The template (see Appendix 1 for the full model) works through the following stages, which also help structure this destination plan:

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

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 Amble 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 and residents. This included an open workshop to which local tourism related businesses were invited. Appendix 2 lists the people and organisations that have helped to design and shape this Plan.

A Leadership Group was convened for Amble which is made up of public, private and community representatives. The Leadership Group are responsible for leading the Market Town Welcome project and will be responsible for implementing the actions listed in this plan.

In addition to the meetings and workshops, the process has been supplemented by an online business survey of tourism businesses (including accommodation providers, attractions and indirect providers such as restaurants and retailers), a tourism audit of the town and a review of other relevant research including the 2003 Visitor Survey for Amble and visitor segmentation work undertaken for One NorthEast in 2007/08.

The following meetings were held in the town that have helped to develop this 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 start 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 Amble. The group were 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.

All six towns also met collectively to finalise how to take forward their top priority actions and to discuss common themes across the towns which could potentially be tackled collectively or through joint marketing with the support of Northumberland Tourism.

2. Vision and Objectives

2.1. Vision

The Vision for Amble as a visitor destination is:

- By 2018 Amble will be a vibrant, lively, welcoming town that is proud of its social, industrial and maritime history.
- The harbour area and marina will be key to the visitor experience of Amble. The town will be recognised for its rich heritage, and visitors will enjoy seeing important parts of this history, such as the harbour and the newly developed heritage centre.
- Amble will attract a diverse range of national and international visitors including active holiday makers, birdwatchers, walkers, yachting people and families.

2.2. Objectives

The aims of this destination plan are:

11. To strengthen Amble's identity and profile as an attractive visitor destination.
12. To broaden Amble's visitor market and attract higher spending visitors, to complement the more traditional budget holiday market which will continue to be an important part of the visitor economy.
13. To establish Amble as a year round destination encouraging short breaks throughout the year.
14. To develop a sustainable visitor economy offering excellent service, customer care and value for money.
15. To increase visitor satisfaction levels which will encourage repeat visits and recommendations.
16. To better promote and enable visitors to enjoy the natural and built heritage in and around Amble.
17. To widen the range and improve the quality of the retail and food and drink offers in the town.
18. To encourage more visitors to walk, cycle and use public transport.
19. To encourage new business investment.

20. To encourage and support collaboration between local organisations and businesses to enable joint delivery of the actions.

3. Visitors to Amble

3.1. Visitor Survey

In 2003, a Destination Benchmarking Survey¹ was undertaken in Amble by Northumbria Tourist Board as part of the Northumberland Market Towns Benchmarking Project.

The research was designed to provide an information base on the profile of tourism in Amble and it is the latest data available that is focused on Amble. 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 227 face-to-face interviews were conducted with visitors to Amble during the summer of 2003. Interviews were carried out on a random basis in various locations throughout Amble.

Some useful data regarding visitors to Amble that the survey identified included:

- **Visitor trends:**
 - Two thirds of visitors to Amble were staying overnight, but most were staying outside the town.
 - The average size of groups visiting Amble was above the average for other destinations participating in the Benchmarking Scheme.
 - A relatively high proportion of visitors included children in their party.
 - Relatively few visitors were from the 16 – 24 and 25 – 34 age groups.
 - Regarding the socio-economic profile of visitors to Amble, approximately half were from the more affluent ABC1 groups and this proportion was lower than that found in other destinations.
 - Amble attracts a high proportion of loyal visitors – 80% had visited at least once in the previous twelve months.
 - 99% of all visitors were from within the UK, including 72% from within the Northumbria region.

¹ Amble Visitor Survey 2003. Northumberland Market Town Benchmarking Project. Northumbria Tourist Board (2004).

- **Purpose of the visit:**

- 89% of respondents were visiting Amble for a holiday or leisure trip, 7% were visiting friends and relatives and 4% were on a special shopping trip.
- Sightseeing was a key motivator.
- Shopping was also an important reason for visiting Amble, particularly for repeat visitors.

- **Use of tourism services:**

- 76% of overnight visitors were staying in commercial accommodation. All visitors preferred non-serviced accommodation.
- Visitors staying in Amble were less likely to be satisfied with their accommodation than those staying elsewhere. This applied to the quality of their accommodation, quality of service and value for money.
- The average length of stay in the town was two hours for day visitors, which was below the average for other destinations. However, the average length of stay for overnight visitors was nine nights – longer than the average in other destinations.
- 87% of visitors arrived in Amble on the day of their interview by personal transport, which was similar to the proportion in other Market Towns. Only 4% used public transport.
- 32% of visitors to Amble had visited the TIC during their visit, a higher proportion than in other destinations.

- **Strengths of the town:**

- Visitors felt the welcome in the town was a particular strength, awarding an average score above that found in other destination types.
- The most popular single feature of Amble was the Marina, and the beach and coastline were also very well liked.
- Significant numbers of visitors cited factors relating to the peace and quiet and general atmosphere when asked what they liked most about the town.
- Smaller numbers liked the market and shops.

- **Weaknesses in Amble:**

- The average score for places to eat and drink in Amble was below the average for other destinations.
- The aggregated score for shopping was also comparatively low and the range of shops and the quality of goods for sale were identified as particular causes for concern.
- All participating destinations received relatively low scores for cleanliness of public toilets in this category, and Amble's scores were lower than those achieved in other destinations.
- The satisfaction score for evening entertainment was the lowest of any element of a visit to Amble.
- Traffic and parking issues were also highlighted as an aspect of their visit which visitors had disliked.
- Specific comments relating to cleanliness included a lack of litter bins and dog bins, as well as the town being generally dirty.
- It was also suggested that the town could offer a better range of cafés and restaurants, shops and sports facilities.

- **Recommendations from the Northumberland Market Towns Benchmarking Project**

- A twin track approach to marketing for new and repeat visitors
- Marketing messages building on key motivating factors and the most popular elements of a visit to Amble
- PR opportunities around the TIC and market, which achieved satisfaction scores above the national average
- Addressing visitors' concerns about elements of the visit which achieved lower than average scores, including public toilets, street cleanliness and places to eat and drink

These results need to be read with the caveat that they are now five years old, and therefore some of the issues that came to light through the study may longer be applicable. A new survey could produce a more informed picture of the current state of the tourism offer in Amble.

3.2. Segmentation – Visitor Profiles

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 Amble. 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 Amble were generally:

- **Functionals** – self reliant; price driven; value function over style; traditional values, but interested in new experiences; not risk averse. Within the Amble workshop exercise our functional couple were called Brian and Susan and were travelling with their dog²
- **Habituals** – Largely inactive; low spending group; very traditional; strongly resistant to change; risk adverse; value relaxation, peace and quiet. Our habitual couple were Frank and Brenda.
- **Traditionals** – Self reliant; internally referenced; slow to adopt new options; strong orientation towards traditional values; value individual attention and service. Our traditional couple were Robert and Hilary.

There are some groups which cut across the segmentation model. The following were seen as important visitors for Amble:

- **Birdwatchers/Nature Based tourists** – Amble is popular with visitors who are interested in nature based tourism (such as walking, birdwatching etc).
- **Families** – in the segmentation model any group can include families. Amble is a traditional family holiday destination and attracts a number of repeat visitors, with many visitors coming to the town more than once a year, many from within Northumberland/Newcastle/Gateshead area.

² More detailed information on each of the segments can be found in Appendix 3.

3.3. Business Survey

As part of this study a business survey was available on-line and in hard copy for local businesses who have dealings with visitors to complete. The purpose of the business survey was to ascertain from local businesses in the town the current tourism issues and also to identify if there are any opportunities to develop the appeal of the town. They were also able to comment on visitors' likes and dislikes and remark on what will encourage visitors to stay longer or spend more.

Within Amble nine businesses completed the business survey, the largest proportion of responses were received from self-catering accommodation with a minority coming from small hotels, pubs, restaurants and retailers. Clearly, responses came entirely from small businesses, as all of them employ ten or less members of staff. Similarly, only one business has more than 25 rooms. The vast majority of the businesses are open all year. In terms of length of time in operation, just under half of the respondents have been in business for less than two years and only one respondent has been in business for more than ten years. Virtually all of the businesses would like to see an increase in business during the winter months, in particular during November, January and February. Only one business expressed a desire to increase business in August.

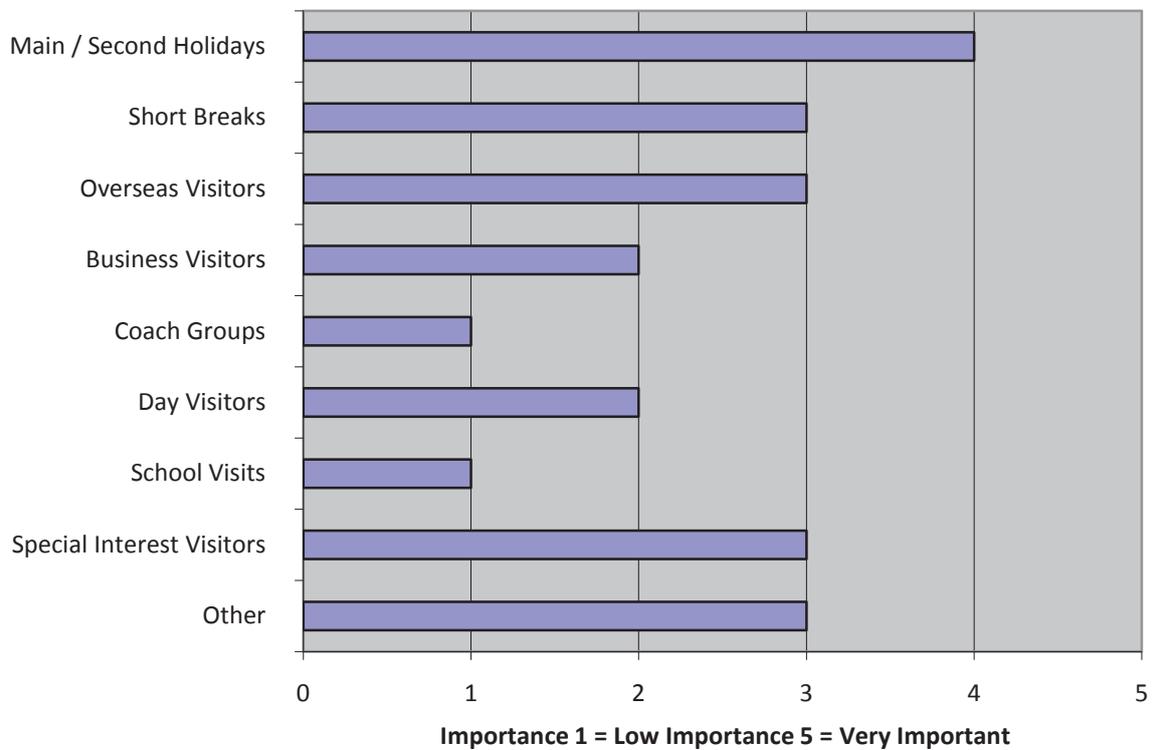
In terms of quality over half of the respondents are four or five star or equivalent. Of those who responded to the question on trading trends, a little over half claimed that profitability had gone up slightly in the last three years, with the remainder stating that profitability levels had remained stable.

The most commonly cited areas which businesses would like to receive support from local authorities and other organisations is in marketing, both of the individual business and of the local area. Business development and internet marketing were the two areas of training that respondents deemed would be of most benefit.

Visitors to Amble

In terms of current visitors to Amble, businesses ranked those on their main or second holidays, short breaks, overseas visitors and special interest visitors as the most important for their business. It appears that the town is not attracting business visitors or day visitors to the same extent whilst coach groups and school visits are even less significant in terms of visitor numbers. However, the former point should be made with the caveat that any accommodation providers who had completed the survey would be less likely to recognise visitors who do not stay over-night, and consequently contribute to bed spaces. Regarding marketing and promotion, the most commonly

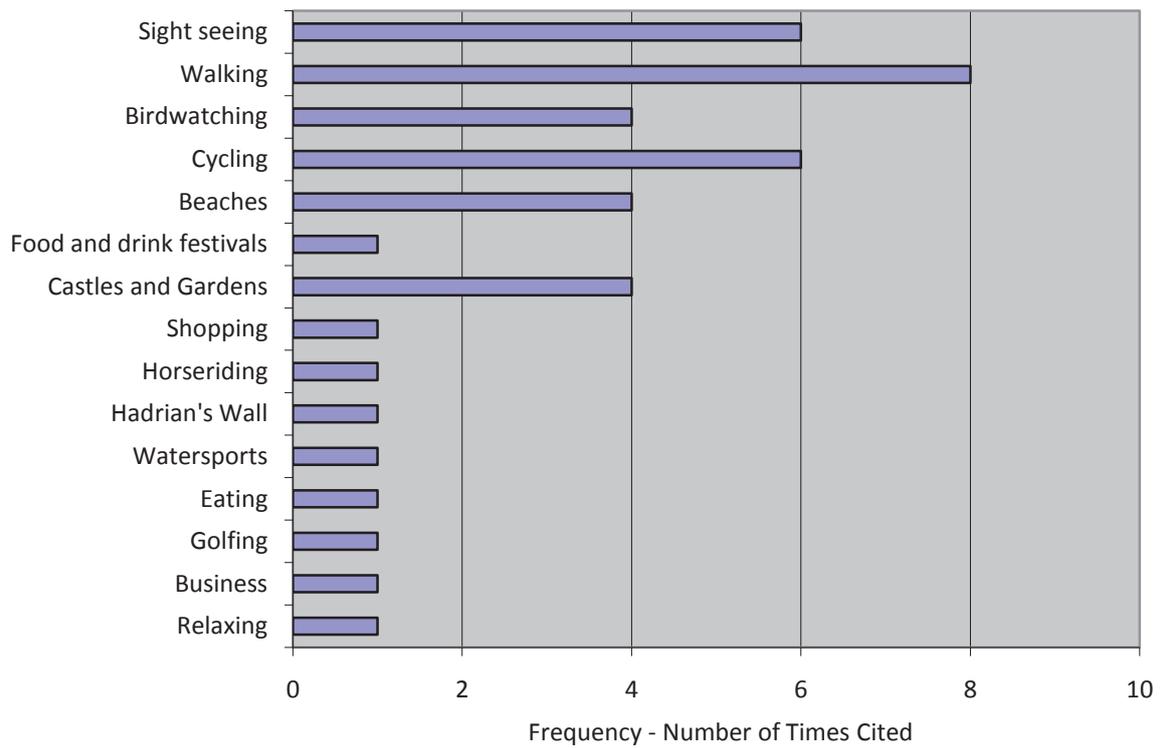
cited vehicle for attracting custom was through a business website, followed by a town or district website or guide and a tourist information centre. However, most businesses claimed that less than a quarter of their custom comes through the local tourist information centre.



Activities Undertaken

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

Figure 1: Activities undertaken by visitors to Amble



Source: Amble Business Survey. Base: 8 respondents

Nature based tourism is clearly popular in Amble and the surrounding area with walking, birdwatching and cycling being cited frequently in the survey. General sightseeing in and around the area and attractions such as Alnwick Castle and Gardens and nearby beaches are also popular activities among visitors to Amble.

4. The Tourism Offer

It is important to have a full understanding of what Amble has to offer visitors. This required us to ascertain both the aspects that current visitors like and dislike about the town and also what features could attract new and different types of visitors. To get a fuller understanding about what Amble has to offer visitors, a comprehensive audit of the town was carried out which included a quantitative element (a physical count of what is available) and a qualitative element (quality scoring the provision). In addition, the business survey included questions which would help to understand what the town's appeal is to visitors and any feedback about the town businesses receive from visitors.

4.1. Town Audit

The tourism audit of Amble 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 5, whilst the following section highlights the strengths and gaps present in the town.

Accommodation

Amble has a wide range of accommodation which includes a number of B&Bs and Guesthouses, several self-catering units and one caravan site. The audit identified that there is a need for a good quality, modern hotel in the town that is capable of accommodating significant numbers of visitors. In addition, there is also a need for youth hostel or bunk house accommodation.

Visitor Attractions

The audit identified a number of attractions and activities that visitors to Amble would enjoy. The primary strengths of the town include countryside features such as Druridge Bay Country Park, Hermitage Warkworth River and Hallbank Well, wildlife sites such as Coquet Island, historic buildings such as Warkworth Castle in addition to other attractions including East Cemetery Spire, Amble town Square the AONB and SSSI and nearby Blue Flag beaches.

Amble boasts a good range of sports, outdoor activity and entertainment facilities, including two gyms and a swimming pool, cycling, fishing, sailing, canoeing, and tennis as well as a number of local

walking and cycle routes. However, aside from the numerous pubs in Amble there is little other evening entertainment provision in the town.

Amble has a comparatively full annual calendar of events that could be of interest to visitors to the town. In Amble itself there is the Amble Sea Fayre Festival in July and Amble Christmas Lights community procession in late November. Nearby, there is Hauxley Fair on the annual August Bank Holiday, Slaters' Fun Fair in September as well as a multitude of events held in Druridge Bay throughout the year. Spring was the only time of year highlighted in the audit when there could be more events or festivals to attract visitors. It was also suggested that within Amble itself there could be a regular programme of more specialist markets such as a farmers' market, a fish market and a European market.

Retail and Food and Drink Offer

The town has a number of speciality shops that would be of interest to visitors. There are several speciality food shops, an antiques retailer, three arts and craft shops and a handful of clothing shops, although these are catering primarily for women only. There is a general outdoor market held in the town every Sunday. In terms of eating out, the audit revealed that the offer is less comprehensive. Whilst there are a number of take-aways and cafes, and many pubs serving average food, the town markedly lacks a restaurant or high quality eating venue. It was also suggested that the town could benefit from having an internet café and a quality delicatessen.

General town Infrastructure

Amble has four car parks which in total provide approximately 140 car parking spaces. However, currently there is no designated coach park, so coaches tend to park on an ad hoc basis near the Town Square.

From the bus station in Church Street it is possible to catch buses to Ashington, Alwick and Newcastle and the nearest railway station is five miles from Amble in Alnmouth.

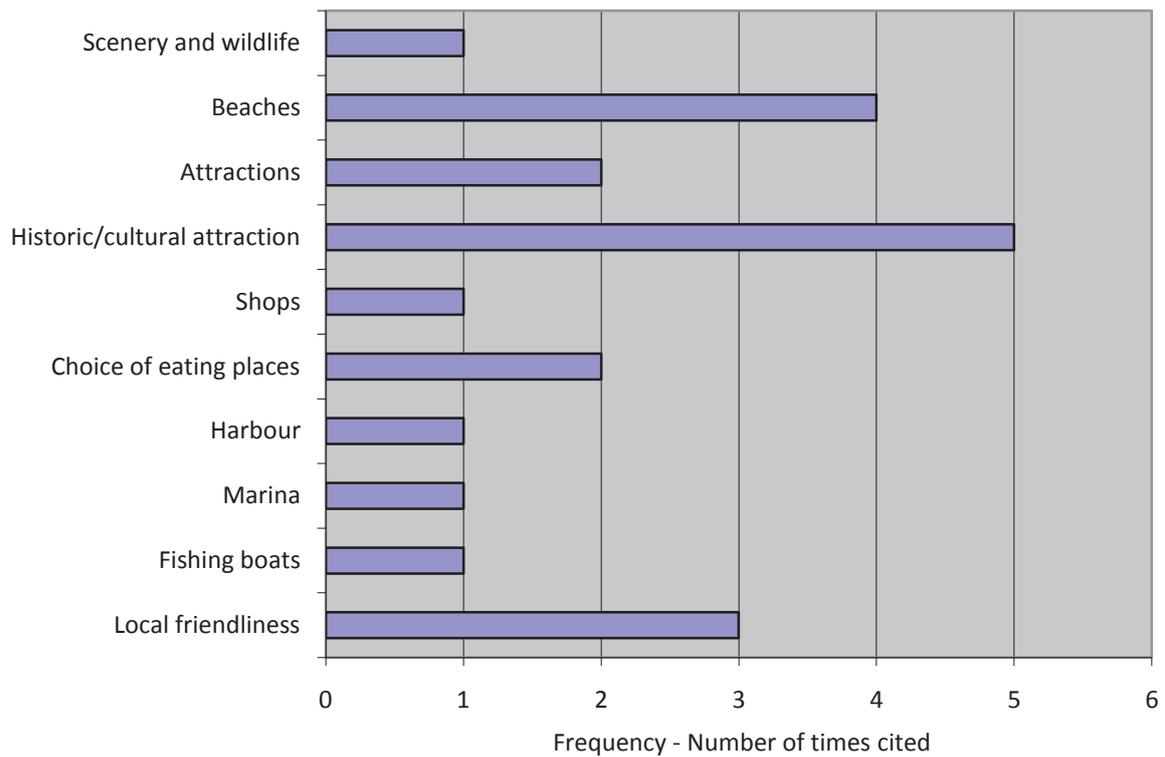
The audit revealed that the public toilet provision in the town is insufficient. The only public toilets are located in the TIC and in the Harbour and they are not open in the evenings.

Amble has a tourist information centre in Queen Street which in 2007 received over 20,000 counter enquiries and over 2,000 telephone enquiries.

4.2. Business Survey

The business survey asked respondents about what their guests generally like and dislike about Amble. The attractions cited most prevalently were the local beaches and cultural and historic sites. It is evident that the extent of local friendliness within Amble is also important to visitors.

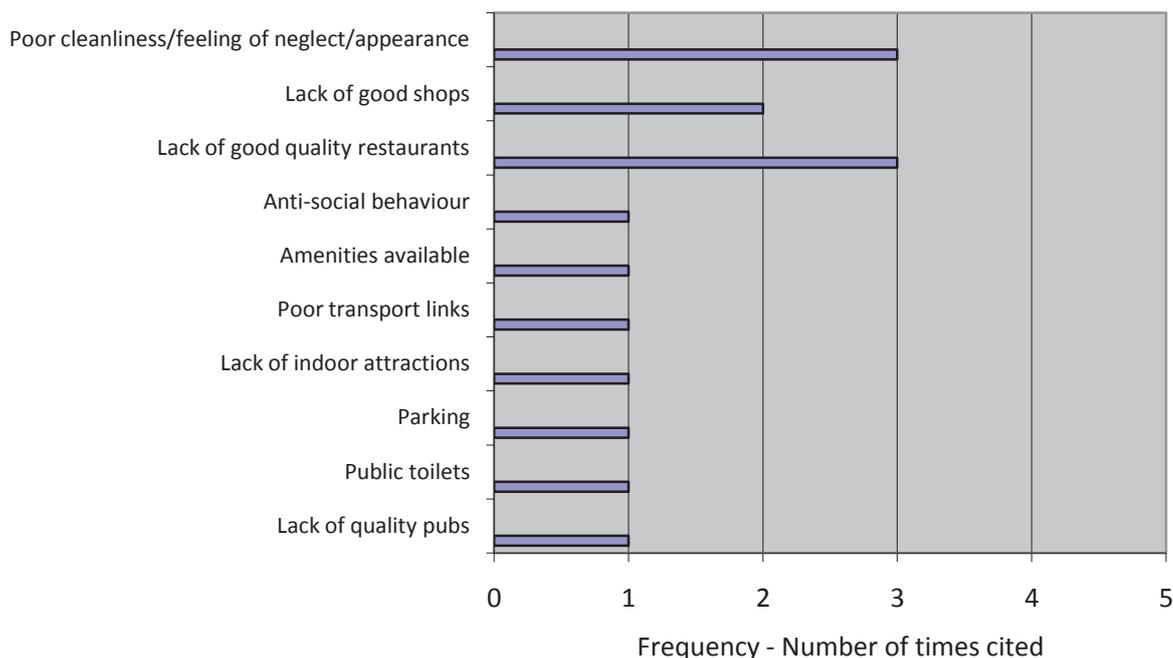
Figure 2: What visitors like about Amble



Source: Amble Business Survey. Base: 10 respondents

In terms of what visitors to Amble dislike the most commonly cited responses regarded the general cleanliness and appearance of the town and the lack of good quality shops and restaurants.

Figure 3: What Visitors Dislike about Amble



Source: Amble Business Survey. Base: 10 respondents

Possible Improvements

The business survey asked respondents what kind of improvements they would like to see made within the town in order to attract more visitors or keep current visitors in the town for longer and in turn help to enhance the attraction of the area as a visitor destination. The list below highlights the responses from the business survey, a fuller discussion of potential developments is presented in section 5.

- General improvement to the aesthetics of the town
- Better linkage and promotion with Warkworth, Alnwick and Alnmouth.
- Better coordination of town centre traffic
- Establishment of good quality restaurants in the local area
- Better care of roads and ditches
- More effective coordination of maintenance works by domestic service companies to limit the extent of road works continually causing traffic problems in the town.
- The construction of a wet weather facility
- Co-ordinated signage and street furniture throughout the town - of high quality and low maintenance
- Investment within the harbour/quay area

- Better car parking signage
- Development of a town planners' guide advertising the local tourism offer and promoting a local brand
- Promotion of the area as the 'Coastal Gateway to Northumberland'
- Better range of shops
- Establishment of a 'national name' supermarket
- Range of good quality restaurants
- Better policing in the town at weekends to minimise level of fighting, drunkenness and general rowdiness.

Current Promotion of Amble

Comments and suggestions received from the businesses regarding the marketing and promotion of the town included:

- North East television adverts are particularly impressive and the amount and quality of advice and training that is available is also proving very helpful.
- Some progress is being made in reducing overlap between regional, county and local tourism bodies and publications and this effort needs to continue.
- A better range of events and attractions throughout the year could help to counter the pronounced seasonality to the tourism trade that is evident in Amble
- Larger and better publicised markets, enhanced with street theatre, music, trees and planters would do much to boost the town.
- There needs to be better cooperation between market towns on what they have to offer in terms of markets and other events and festivals so that there can be better degree of joint promotion to visitors.

There were some negative comments received from businesses about the town and its appeal to visitors:

"The shopping area could be greatly improved with more specialist shops giving it more of a holiday atmosphere."

“Amble needs to come out of the dark ages, retain the charm that there is but get rid of all the dereliction and cheapness.”

“Closed shops are no good!”

“The markets are dying in all of the market towns, due to large fees and restrictions on selling.”

“We need to soften the harshness of the shopping area.”

4.3. SWOT

A SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis has been carried out for the town of Amble and its surrounding villages from a tourist perspective. The SWOT has been completed using the results of the business survey and town audit, and exercises conducted at the town meetings and workshops.

Strengths

- Access to the countryside
- Adequate signage and street furniture
- An improving image
- AONB is a huge draw
- Coastal Location
- 'Community' people
- Heritage – e.g. fishing industry
- Historic walks around Amble – town trail being installed April 2008
- People keep coming back
- Popular in winter
- Quiet
- Rustic
- Soft Play
- Swimming pool
- Unique
- Water sports

Weaknesses

- First impressions - Off coast road – sewage works and industrial estate

- Inadequate public transport in the evening
- Insufficient publicity
- Lack of accommodation
- Lack of evening activities
- Limited eating venues
- Limited indoor activities
- No family pubs
- No places to eat in the evening (in the town – have to go to the Granary or the Marina – at either ends of town)
- Not enough facilities in Amble to keep people for longer periods
- Not enough parking
- Not enough star-rated accommodation
- Not enough street cleaning
- Not much that visitors would want to spend money on
- Over-dependence on one night stops
- Perception of Amble as poor relation to Alnwick with inferior services.
- Poor standards of parking, toilets and infrastructure
- TIC only open half a year

Opportunities

- Better use of the town square
- Birdwatching – Coquet, Hauxley
- Craft/gift shop/art gallery – shops visitors will buy from
- Coquet island – web cam, more boat trips
- Diving
- Golf

- Improve communications between local businesses to other relevant organizations to improve knowledge of the tourism offer and ensure good working relationships
- Improve Queen Street
- Instill a sense of pride
- Kitesurfing/water sports
- Parking at the Braid – better signage etc
- People using the Marina need accommodation
- Promote the town better and what is on offer
- Provide a touring caravan/camping site
- Sea/beach fishing
- Visitors from Western and Northern Europe
- Youth hostel provision

Threats

- Business 'buy in' – too depressed and sceptical
- Communications issues with council on town future
- Controversy over 'conservation' area status
- Economic downturn – will this affect holidays – positively or negatively
- Increased competition from abroad
- Lack of involvement with community organisations
- Linking in with local development framework
- Local government reorganisation
- Resources – human and financial

5. Destination Management and Promotion

5.1. The Strategy

Any tourism strategy for Amble needs to recognise the fundamental role that the harbour and Marina play in local tourism for the town. In the 1830s a harbour was built at the mouth of the River Coquet, where Amble sits, and the small village became an important local port. The main exports were coal from Radcliffe and Broomhill collieries. Other goods to pass through Amble included pit props, timber, bricks and iron. Fishing was also an important industry and the fish were salted using salt produced locally and then exported through the harbour. Although the harbour has become less important for trade it still plays an important role in the local economy primarily thanks to the fishing industry and the Marina, where pleasure boats are moored. It is also an enormous draw for visitors to watch fishing boats and the workings of the harbour.

Visitor markets are shifting - the traditional budget holiday markets are in decline or going overseas. The expanding markets are more upmarket segments including traditionals, cosmopolitans and discoverers. Amble may not be able to attract the top end of the cosmopolitan and discoverer groups but families and activity participants in these groups could find Amble an attractive destination if it raises its game. The Marina, historic harbour, harbour side eating places and sea or beach related activities will have a strong pull if the other elements of the town can support them.

Amble will have to grasp new opportunities to ensure that the town caters for the needs of more demanding visitors. In fact there is a serious risk that if the tourism sector does not address the changing markets, the visitor economy of Amble could gradually decline, become increasingly less sustainable and more difficult to adapt 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 target visitor markets. By focusing on the more upmarket visitor segments Amble 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 attracting in an iconic business which might raise the profile of the whole town. Such developments lift confidence and aspirations of many other businesses and organisations and generate PR coverage.

There is a need to build confidence in the visitor economy that Amble **will** attract more upmarket sectors and **will** become a more desirable destination 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 Amble wishes to focus on before identifying what the future visitor experience in Amble could be.

Future Target Markets

The views of local tourism businesses illustrated in section 4.2 demonstrate the need to make changes if the new target visitor markets are to be attracted to Amble in numbers and encouraged to stay and spend their money.

In line with regional and Northumberland tourism strategies the agreed strategy within the town is to try to attract and cater for higher spend visitor segments in Amble. Demographic and social trends have led to all visitors having increased 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. Furthermore these visitors have more money to spend, although it is often over a shorter period.

The more traditional and budget markets that Amble already attracts - the Functionals, Habituals and Traditionals are a relatively loyal market. It could be argued that the businesses where most of these types of visitors stay undertake the bulk of the marketing to attract them. Thus the town should focus on attracting more independent visitors in the higher spending groups who need to be attracted by what Amble has to offer.

During the town meetings, the groups looked to identify which markets or segments (from the ArkLeisure segments) Amble would appeal to. The town agreed to target more Traditionals and Functionals, but also to promote the town to Discoverers:

- **Discoverers** - Independent in mind and action. Little influenced by style or brand but interested in new options. Buy on function and value to them. Looking for new and educational experiences. Our discoverer couple in the workshop exercise were Adrian and Chloe.

Particular targets could be family discoverers or activity enthusiast discoverers. Discoverers enjoy new experiences and therefore may not visit Amble more than once. The ideal scenario might be that they come for a short break and find that there is more to see and do than they thought initially and so they return for a second perhaps longer visit. However they are unlikely to become regular visitors. Their main value is that they spend well while here and will spread the word to friends and family about good places to visit.

We have reflected the needs, values and interests of these target markets in this destination plan. The next section examines Amble's tourism offer and will relate the current offer to the expectations of future target visitors to identify actions required.

Businesses and tourism groups in Amble should continue to work with Northumberland Tourism to use this segmentation model increasingly to identify ways of packaging experiences for target visitor types and to identify which messages will be most effective. More detailed descriptions of the key visitor segments are given in Appendix 3.

Meeting Future Visitor Expectations

Looking specifically at the target markets identified by the town, Amble has chosen to raise its game and look to target the more 'upmarket' visitor to the town – Discoverers - whilst retaining its more traditional markets.

Discoverers are independently minded and value individual and independent shops and eating places. Both groups value excellent service and individual attention. They are interested in new products, experiences, technology and modern style.

Discoverers particularly enjoy intellectual challenges, new products and experiences, live music, unusual shops, markets and attractions which involve investigation and amusement.

This kind of visitor is looking for short breaks which involve time to themselves to escape and expand their knowledge and experiences.

For the identified future target market, the town conducted an exercise to identify what that market would like about the town, what they would dislike and what they would like to see in the future.

Traditionals

Likes	Dislikes	What is missing
Alnwick Castle and Gardens	Boy racers	Craft centre
Beaches	Inadequate parking facilities	History centre with shop, café, crèche and exhibitions
Cragside	Inconsistent and infrequent opening hours of shops	Quality pubs and restaurants
Duridge Bay	Lack of tourist facilities	Sufficient parking
Friendly locals	Loitering and intimidating youths	

Gift shopping		
Metro Centre		
Walking along the pier		
Warkworth		
Window shopping		
Woodhorn Museum		

Functionals

Likes	Dislikes	What is missing
Alnwick Castle and Gardens	Empty Shops	Additional car-parks
Coastal Views	Run down appearance	Better range of quality shops
Friendly People	Shutters	Family pubs
Harbour Walks		Local pride
Woodhorn		Quality restaurants offering local produce
		Sufficient wet weather attractions
		Tidy, accessible walks around the harbour that offer seating

Discoverers

Likes	Dislikes	What is missing
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Alnwick Castle and Gardens	Empty Shops	Additional car-parks of sufficient quality
Castlemania	Infrequent markets	Better range of quality shops and smart, vibrant town centre
Coastal Views and harbour walks	Poor signage and Unattractive areas of streetscape	Friendly pubs
Hauxley	Shutters	Good transport links
Heritage Coast		Quality restaurants serving local food
Visits to Woodhorn		Sizable supermarket
		Sufficient evening entertainment
		Tourist Information Centre open year round

If Amble is to attract some of the higher spending groups successfully it will seriously need to raise its game in the retail and food sectors. Currently, whilst there are some speciality shops in the town, there is not enough to lift the overall offer. The quality and range of food and drink in the town is limited and this has been highlighted in both the 2003 visitor survey, the business survey and the Retail Distinctiveness study as an element that needs improving.

In terms of accommodation, Amble has a good range of provision with most being quality rated, however, the majority of provision in Amble is non-serviced and there may be a need to increase the serviced accommodation provision if the town wishes to attract the higher spending groups. Across all accommodation providers there will need to be a further shift towards quality and modern style/facilities.

Attractions and heritage interpretation will need to be interesting and engaging, possibly using new media or clever ideas. The 2003 survey highlighted that visitors were less satisfied with the range of places to visit in the town so this is an area that the town really needs to develop.

On the positive side, promoting arts and crafts, developing the food and drink sector, upgrading markets and introducing evening entertainment such as theatre, events and live music would bring the town to life more for these visitors and encourage them to spend, stay longer and recommend it to others. Web based and other new technologies would enable easy information gathering, booking and planning.

Traditionals would value much of the above, particularly good meals and service. But they are more driven by functionality and have less interest in modern style or new technology. They will be interested in visiting historic properties, churches, gardens and visits which are relaxing, nostalgic and educational, perhaps followed by a meal in a traditional pub.

In order to retain and increase this visitor market the best of the traditional should be brought out in Amble. Thus it would be good to see one or two pubs serving excellent, traditional food (including seafood) and churches could review their welcome and information for visitors.

Thought also needs to be given to special needs of families and overseas visitors. This may include the promotion of family friendly eating places as well as children's activities and trails at attractions. Overseas visitor origins should be monitored to identify which nationalities are most common and whether this indicates the need for information in other languages for example. The most cost effective way to do this is on the internet thereby avoiding expensive printing costs.

5.2. The Future Visitor Experience

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

In 5 – 10 years time Amble will be a vibrant, lively, welcoming town that is proud of its social, industrial and maritime history. Throughout the town there are colourful floral displays and pieces of art that celebrate Amble's connection with the sea.

Visitors to the town benefit from clear signposting from the A1 and clear directions to the main car parks, attractions and accommodation.

Visitors enjoy walking along the coastal paths and around by the harbour and Marina. There is a newly developed heritage centre where visitors enjoy finding out about the area and its diverse activities and can purchase local arts and craft items.

Amble is popular with active holiday makers who use the town as a base for both frequent short breaks and longer stays during an extended holiday season. Visitors can take pleasure in activities

such as kitesurfing, sailing, golf, walking, cycling, diving and fishing. Accommodation providers in the town welcome these visitors and provide them with the facilities they need to enjoy their holiday or just to have a relaxing break.

Amble is also popular with birdwatchers and walkers who can enjoy the delights of the changing seasons. These visitors like to visit the heritage centre where they can find out all about the local walks and wildlife in the area. Coquet Island, Hauxley Nature Reserve and Druridge Bay are key draws for bird-watchers, where they can spot puffins, Roseate Terns and other seabirds. For the landlubbers the heritage centre has a web cam set up so that people can view the birdlife on the island from the mainland.

There is a regular programme of events and markets in the town throughout the year including food and drink events, arts and crafts and also festivals that celebrate Amble's maritime history. Amble Marina continues to be a popular destination for sailing boats, providing a safe haven with panoramic views.

The town has several family friendly pubs and quality restaurants that source and promote local produce.

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. Amble needs to focus on four main priorities:

1. Maximising the tourism opportunities of local beaches, harbour and the Marina
2. Enhancing the aesthetics of the town centre, harbour and Queen Street
3. Improving the quality of the Food and Drink offer
4. Supporting and broadening the local tourism economy

In addition two 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. Car parking, signing and traffic strategy
6. Marketing and promotion

The following sections explain and develop these priorities in a little more detail:

Maximising the tourism opportunities of local beaches and the marina

The Marina and local beaches are fundamental draws that Amble has to offer visitors to the town. The working port and fishing industry are also important to Amble. Sailing, and to a lesser extent diving and sea-kayaking could be marketed much more effectively if Amble had the services and infrastructure to support these activities. Whilst the Marina has already been described as Amble's "floating hotel" there is an appreciation locally that the town is deficient in a number of vital aspects, including food and drink establishments and retail as well as facilities such as an adequate public slip-way and designated areas for specialist water-sports. Moreover, entry to and egress from the harbour is currently restricted to high water levels for all vessels (including lifeboat) because of siltation reducing the width of channel access. Studies have already been done to identify how to address the siltation problems affecting accessibility to the harbour mouth as well as the infrastructure required to provide adequate storage and processing facilities. Storage facilities are needed to keep the quayside clear of boxes, ropes etc which could be dangerous to visitors. Processing and fish handling facilities would allow the fishermen to add value to their product. This is the only way they can increase their income from the reducing levels of catch they are legally allowed to land, as it would allow fish to be sold directly to the public which would create another tourist draw. In time the town could also benefit from the formation of groups such as a local diving club, in order to strengthen the identity of the town as a key water-sports destination.

Enhancing the aesthetics of the town centre, harbour and Queen Street

The Leadership Group felt that the tourism potential of the town is significantly undermined by the relatively poor physical appearance of a number of key areas. This is an issue that was also highlighted by the retail distinctiveness study. Both the town centre and harbour approaches could be improved significantly through relatively small-scale and inexpensive interventions and actions that could be achieved in a short space of time.

Improving the quality of the Food and Drink offer

There are opportunities for improving both the retail and food and drink offer through encouraging shops to sell fresh fruit, vegetables and seafood, and developing more local food and drink market stalls. Existing cafes, restaurants and pubs could upgrade their food offer, promote their local sourcing and recipes and ensure that the quality of the service is excellent. The need for at least one good quality restaurant and a family friendly 'foody' pub has been identified. Speciality retailers

could add additional services for visitors such as gift wrapping, postage home and mail order for future orders.

Supporting and broadening the local tourism economy

There are a number of areas that need to be developed in order to secure Amble's future as a tourism destination. As with many tourism destinations, Amble is affected by the seasonal nature of the industry. However, many within the town felt that the seasonality in the town is not as extreme as in other destinations, and could be even less so if the town was to further promote a range of water-based activities and all-weather services, whilst enhancing retail, food and drink and accommodation provision. Developments are needed in the town so that it becomes more of a year round destination with the support and provision that visitors are looking for.

Allied to this, Amble needs to better support those visitors who would be attracted to the town out of season – in particular walkers, cyclists, birdwatchers and water-sports enthusiasts. Businesses (particularly accommodation providers) need to develop to accommodate the needs of these types of visitors by offering for example drying rooms, secure storage, luggage storage etc.

Car Parking, Signage and Traffic Management

The town audit revealed some significant issues with regard to directional signage on entering Amble along with some parking management problems. The town identified the need for a comprehensive traffic management plan which would clearly identify the issues, the causes and solutions that suit the needs of visitors, local people and businesses.

Options included allocating a designated coach parking area and implementing improvements to the entrance of the car park.

Marketing and Promotions

Marketing will bring all the strengths of the town together to communicate messages to target markets. Simple improvements can be made to ensure websites are promoting Amble in a co-ordinated way with common messages. Events need better promotion and can raise the town's profile significantly. There is scope for trialling specific promotions targeting key segments in nearby cities for short breaks and joint promotions with other Northumberland towns.

The main identity or messages for promotion that the town would like to use in future marketing and promotion work is around the concept that there are a number of things to see and do in and around Amble. A promotional identity was suggested as:

“Visit Amble - the friendliest port, friendliest people, good local food, excellent accommodation.”

“Amble around our coastal paths.”

“From sea and sand to coasts and castles, for a holiday without the hassles, visit Amble, the friendliest port.”

“Traditional fishing village, a harbour with heart, soul, history and heritage.”

As is detailed in the action plan below, the town would like to better promote the opportunities for water sports and water based tourism available from the town.

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 crucial factor is what organisation 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 the plan. It is followed by more detailed descriptions of the top priority actions.

AMBLE – updated Destination Action Plan – December 2010

KEY: Denotes actions started or underway Denotes actions completed Denotes actions yet to be actioned Denotes actions yet to be actioned, but which were not identified as key projects in original plan. Projects identified as the main key projects that the town would like to action.
 Projects identified in Retail Distinctiveness Survey. Priority or NEW actions for development post 2010.
Bold – new comments. ~~abe~~ – previous actions which are no longer relevant/correct. Abbreviations – see end of document

	Amble - Actions	Priority	Timescale	Delivery	Lead	Cost	Progress to date	Next steps
1.	Maximising the tourism opportunities of local beaches and the Marina							
1.1	Investigate potential for a new or improved public slip-way	High	Quick Win Medium-Long	2	LA ADT HC	£££	Harbour Feasibility study completed, but funding to implement is not available	ADT is currently investigating application to EFF Innovation fund
1.2	Develop diving opportunities and a local diving club	High	Short-Term Medium-Long	2			Reliant on 1.1. Geographic focus for diving is Seahouses/Beadnell, although it is possible to hire dive boats from Amble	Also see 1.3
1.3	Further promotion of existing sea and beach fishing	Medium	Quick Win	1	ADT			Actioned in conjunction with newly formed Business Forum - workshop with local businesses to produce a suite of opportunities for visitors to buy into when booking accommodation -such as fishing trips
1.4	Investigate opportunities to extend kite-surfing and other water sports and potential for allocating specific beach and	High	Quick Win Short	1 + 3				Also to action with Business Forum. Investigate possibility of developing

	Amble - Actions	Priority	Timescale	Delivery	Lead	Cost	Progress to date	Next steps
	water areas for these activities							www.saileastcoatuk.co.uk (managed by Marina)
1.5	Set up mini ferry across river from harbour to near Staithes to give access to beach, plus walking and cycling	High	Short	±	BIO		This is private land.	
2.	Enhancing the aesthetics of the town centre, harbour and Queen Street							
2.1	More varied use of the town square	Very High	Short	2	ADT			Hold and promote farmers markets & continental markets Next market 3 rd April 2011
2.2	Improve cleanliness of Queen Street	Very High	Quick Win	1 + 3	LA		LA undertake cleaning & there are now issues on Queen St	
2.3	Improve street furniture and undertake general tidy-up of the town	Very High	Quick Win	1			Completed	Paint lampposts
2.4	Investigate artistic design on shop shutters	Very High	Short	1 + 3	New Amble business group		Development Trust and Town Council working with volunteers on this	
2.5	Investigate opportunities for sponsored hanging baskets and flower beds	High	Short	1 + 3	New Amble business group	ADT TC		
2.6	Improve seating and promote and maintain accessible walks around the harbour and The Braid	High	Quick Win	1			Currently being investigated with Conservation Area Partnership Scheme	

	Amble - Actions	Priority	Timescale	Delivery	Lead	Cost	Progress to date	Next steps
3.	Food and Drink							
3.1	Establish a higher quality eating venue	High	Short	3			3 x new eating venues – Zecca, Wellwood Arms, Spurrelis	
3.2	Encourage a number of pubs to target family market	High	Short	3				
3.3	Promote and use local produce better	High	Short	1 + 3			See 3.1 and 3.5	
3.4	Develop a new food and drink quarter around the town square	Medium	Medium – long	4			See 3.1	
3.5	Develop a local produce awareness raising campaign and a local producers directory and provide a pilot local produce fund for co-operative activity Work with local producers to promote local produce and address supply/distribution issues	High	Short	1 + 3	ADT		Fourways Foods/Pride of Northumbria ran by ADT.	Continue to contribute to/work with local/regional food initiatives such as Food & Drink Exchange
4.	Supporting and broadening the local tourism economy							
4.1	Provide comprehensive offer to visitors from Scandinavia & Holland in terms of shopping, eating and drinking and entertainment	High	Short	3			www.saileastcoastuk.co.uk?	
4.2	Wider promotion of golf (breaks & packages)	Low	Quick Win	1	ADT			See 1.3
4.3	Progress conversation with YHA and investigate development of youth hostel provision	High	Short - Medium	3	BIO		A new hostel is opening in Alnwick (9 miles away) in 2011	

	Amble - Actions	Priority	Timescale	Delivery	Lead	Cost	Progress to date	Next steps
4.4	Create a business opportunity for a craft and art gallery by developing a bespoke retail space.	Very High	Quick Win Medium	3	ADT		Co-op building is being converted – and will contain viewing area for local produce production. Work underway	
4.5	Develop a heritage centre exhibiting local fishing and mining heritage and providing a café, shop, ballpark and craft centre	Very High	Short – Medium- Long	3	BIO		A heritage centre is due to open in Newbiggin in 2011 (13 miles away)	
4.6	Develop a structure with interpretation which could be used for events and would not need staffing but would create a focal point on the harbourside.	Very High Low	Short – Medium	3			Design & maquettes were made up for a structure for use in Town Square (rather than harbourside).	Ascertain if such a structure is required and can be funded
4.7	Investigate potential sites for a touring caravan and camping site	High	Short Medium	1 + 3	BIO		One site investigated by private investor, planning refused	
4.8	Retain good tourist information facility that is open all year round	Very High	Short	2	NT LA		TIC is currently open Easter-October	Consider provision of in-window out of hours digital information
4.9	Fill empty shop units with long-standing businesses	Very High	Short	3			Currently only Co-op empty	
4.10	Encourage growth of more quality and diverse shops	Very High	Short	3				
NEW 4.11	Investigate market demand/potential feasibility of a bowling alley	Medium	Medium- Long	3	BIO		When asked about how the town could improve its offer in the 2009 visitor study, a number of people mentioned provision of a bowling alley	
5.	Parking, Transport and Signage							
5.1	Strategic review of parking and	Very High	Short	ADG LA				

	Amble - Actions	Priority	Timescale	Delivery	Lead	Cost	Progress to date	Next steps
	signing in Amble to plan best locations for parking for those living, working, shopping and visiting the town (inc coach parking provision).						Local Authority parking strategy due Spring 2011. See 5.2	
5.2	Improve parking at the Braid with better signage and a pedestrian route into the town centre	Very High	Short	2			A new Tesco store is planned for the Braid, bringing 200 new parking spaces	Ensure pedestrian/cycle routes and signage into town is incorporated into developments
5.3	Improve approach signage on entering the town and signage in town	Very High	Quick Win Medium	2	ADT		Town has acquired funding through Conservation Area Partnership Scheme (English Heritage) which has allowed for improvements to town signage	
5.4	Build more car parking depending on outcome of 5.1	High	Medium	2			See 5.1	
6.	Marketing and Promotion							
6.1	Promote the town better and what is on offer such as golf, Coquet Island boat trips and bird-watching	Very High	Short	1 + 3			New pages of Coquet Island produced for www.visitnorthumberland.com Free to use marketing resources produced for businesses to use – including logo, videos and images on www.marketingnorthumberland.com	Business Forum to progress
6.2	Improve communications, town webpages for visitors	Very High	Short	1 + 3			improved info on partner websites including visitnorthumberland.com and www.theambler.co.uk	Business Forum to progress

	Amble - Actions	Priority	Timescale	Delivery	Lead	Cost	Progress to date	Next steps
6.3	Encourage more markets and events	Very High	Short	1 + 3			See 2.1. resources currently do not allow for a wide programme of activities	Ensure events are marketed effectively
7.	Environmental Improvements							
7.1	Create an enhanced gateway at the junction of High Street/Queen Street; Enhance Turner Street/Queen Street junction; Place a new development around Town Square creating a food and drink quarter; Develop an artwork strategy for the town centre and; Encourage pedestrian linkages/public realm to harbour/Coquet Street and Leazes Street	Very High	Currently being explored Medium-Long	2	ADT			Develop Public Realm to enhance links with Queen Street & Harbour Being investigated with Conservation Area Scheme.
7.2	Provide a commercial improvement scheme for shop-fronts within Queen Street	Very High	Underway	2	ADC-LA		To date 9 shops have taken advantage of Conservation Area Partnership Scheme	Continue to promote scheme to businesses whilst funds still remaining
8.	Business Support/Training							
8.11			Short	1 + 3	New Amble business group ADT		ADT runs Employment Counselling Service	Look into providing Food Hygiene, Welcome Host, Health & Safety etc
NEW	Summary of new and priority projects post 2010							
NEW	Undertake Visitor Survey for 2011, and every 2 years	High	Short					

	Amble - Actions	Priority	Timescale	Delivery	Lead	Cost	Progress to date	Next steps
	thereafter							
NEW 1.1	Investigate potential for a new or improved public slip-way	High	Quick Win Medium-Long	2	LA ADT HC	£££	Harbour Feasibility study completed, but funding to implement is not available	ADT is currently investigating application to EFF Innovation fund
NEW 4.11	Investigate market demand/potential feasibility of a bowling alley	Medium	Medium-Long	3	BIO		When asked about how the town could improve its offer in the 2009 visitor study, a number of people mentioned provision of a bowling alley	
NEW 7.1	Encourage pedestrian linkages/public realm to harbour/Coquet Street and Leazes Street							

KEY - Amble

	Projects identified in Retail distinctiveness survey							
	Rose shaded actions reflect priority actions post Dec 2010							

Timescale	
Quick win	Less than 12 months
Short Term	1 – 2 years
Medium Term	2 – 5 years
Long Term	Over 5 years

Delivery	
1	We can deliver locally
2	We can deliver with partners
3	Business Investment Opportunity
4	Needs outside lead

Lead

ADT	Amble Development Trust
ADC	Alnwick District Council
LA	Local Authority
NT	Northumberland Tourism
HC	Harbour Commissioners
BIO	Business Investment Opportunity
TC	Town Council

6.2. Key Projects

Project Number	1.1
Action	Investigate potential for a new or improved public slip-way
Description	<p>It was recognised by the town that if Amble is to extend its reputation as a water-sports destination there is a need for a new or significantly improved public slip-way in the vicinity. This will facilitate the further promotion of activities such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diving • Sea-kayaking • Sailing
Cost	
Lead Delivery Organisation	Alnwick District Council and Northumberland County Council
Other Partners	Amble Marina
Key Issues	<p>Consider reuse of existing slipway or an alternative</p> <p>Identifying a location</p> <p>Securing funding for improvements</p> <p>Land ownership</p> <p>Access requirements for slip-way users</p> <p>Consultation with potential slip-way users</p>
Timetable	Quick Win 6 - 12 months

Project Number	1.2
Action	Develop diving opportunities and a local diving club
Description	Subject to the successful implementation of project 1.1 (see above) it was felt that Amble could develop as a diving destination
Cost	
Lead Delivery Organisation	Northumberland Tourism
Other Partners	Northumberland County Council, Amble Development Trust, One NorthEast, Amble Marina
Key Issues	Securing funding for marketing Identifying marketing routes Consultation eg: with Harbour Commissioners
Timetable	Short Term 1 - 2 years

Project Number	1.4
Action	Investigate opportunities to extend and promote kite-surfing, diving, surfing, sea kayaking and other water sports and potential for allocating specific beach and water areas for these activities
Description	Whilst the local area has already become popular to some extent for various water-based activities, the Leadership Group felt that there is a need for official allocation of specific areas for the more extreme sports that may be potentially hazardous to non-participants. This will ensure that the anticipated rise in water-sports will not impact negatively on the number of other visitors coming to Amble who may choose to visit the beach. Such activities are often very popular with spectators and add dynamism to the image of the town
Cost	
Lead Delivery Organisation	Alnwick District Council
Other Partners	Outdoor Activities Network - private sector operators Northumberland County Council, Northumberland Tourism, One NorthEast, voluntary sector operators
Key Issues	Identifying possible locations Undertaking local consultation Engage Harbour Commissioners and secure their support
Timetable	Short Term 1 – 2 years

Project Number	3.1
Action	Establish a higher quality eating venue
Description	One the main areas of weakness in Amble that was identified through the destination planning process was the lack of a quality eating venue in the town. If Amble is to attract a greater number of higher spending visitors there is need for a restaurant or bistro of significant quality and size as well as a family friendly pub.
Cost	
Lead Delivery Organisation	Amble Development Trust
Other Partners	
Key Issues	<p>Identifying and securing funding</p> <p>Identifying a private sector investor</p> <p>Utilising the previously undertaken scoping study for the former Co-Op building which justifies the requirement for a training restaurant, based on the award winning Acorn House eco model. Such a restaurant will train entrants in all areas of eco and environmental restaurateur management and use top quality local seasonal produce. It will also house a bakery and deli along with small retail units for rental for quality arts and crafts products.</p>
Timetable	Short Term 1 -2 years

Project Number	4.5
Action	Develop a heritage centre exhibiting local fishing and mining heritage and providing a café, shop, ballpark and craft centre
Description	<p>Amble has a rich history of both the fishing and the mining industries that at present is insufficiently promoted by the town. It was suggested that it could be exhibited in a local heritage centre, providing an indoor attraction for locals and visitors to the town. This could also house information on local wildlife, walks, exhibitions by local artists, host local art/craft groups, cafe etc. In the shorter term the town could look to develop a permanent structure with interpretation which could be used for events and other local promotional activities.</p> <p>Any development should take into consideration previous feasibility work into such a project.</p>
Cost	
Lead Delivery Organisation	Amble Development Trust
Other Partners	Northumberland Tourism, Northumberland County Council, Alnwick District Council, One NorthEast, Commercial partners
Key Issues	<p>Collaboration with existing land-owner of identified site</p> <p>Securing funding</p>
Timetable	Short - Medium 1 - 5 years

6.3. Northumberland wide 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:

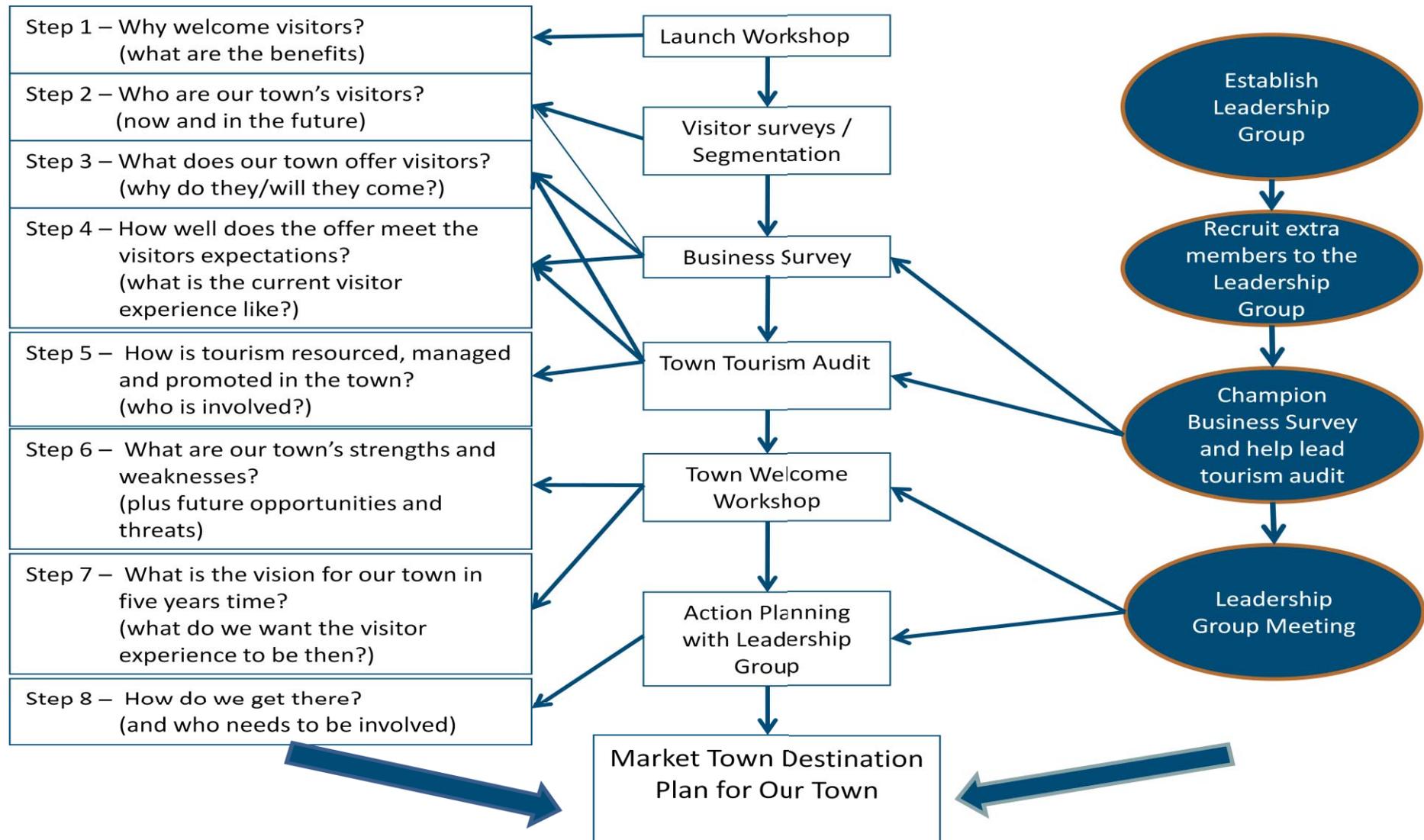
- Outdoor activities - walking/cycling, watersports, nature based tourism
- History and heritage
- Food and drink
- Art, culture and events
- Business support and training
- Planning, infrastructure and destination management
- Promotion of investment opportunities

Amble has an opportunity to participate in many of the joint initiatives proposed which are detailed in the Market Town Welcome Over-arching report.

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 to 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.

7. Appendices

1. Appendix 1 – Destination Management Plan Template



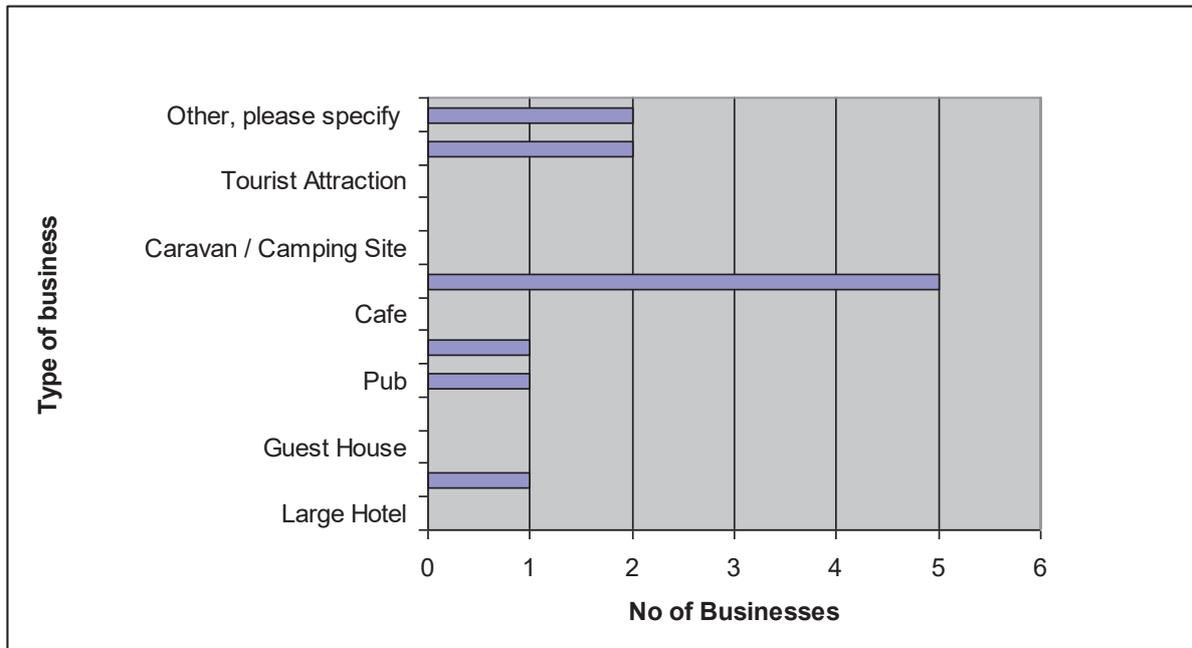
2. Appendix 2 - Organisations and Individuals who have contributed to the development of this plan

Julia Aston	Amble Development Trust
Louise Stott	Amble Development Trust
David Cook	Amble Development Trust
Terri Harper	Northumberland Tourism
Gary Campbell	Alnwick District Council
Sue Campbell	Alnwick District Council
Jeff McCloud	Alnwick District Council
Helen Lewis	Amble Town Council
Various retailers and accommodation providers of Amble	

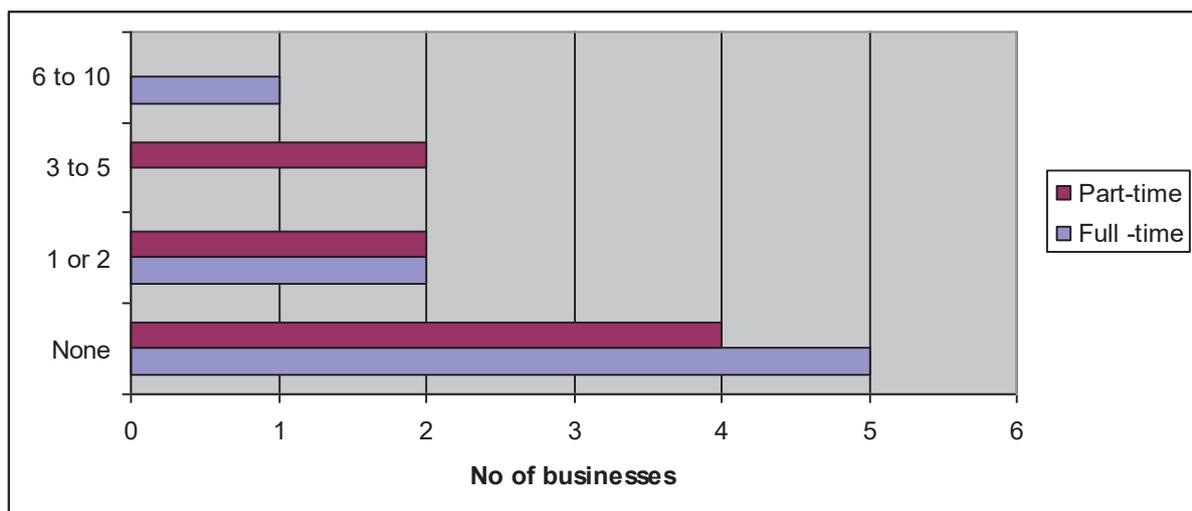
3. Business Survey Results

9 Businesses responded to the survey in Amble. The following charts give an overview of the main results:

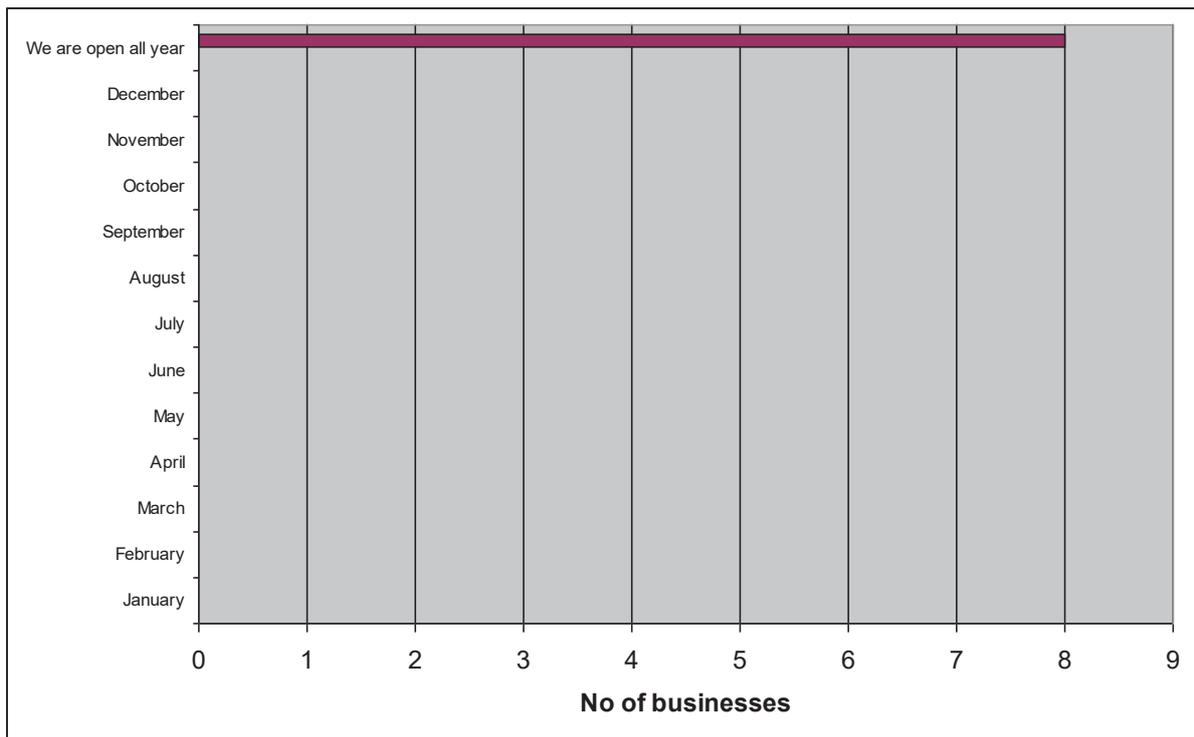
1. Type of tourism business - respondents



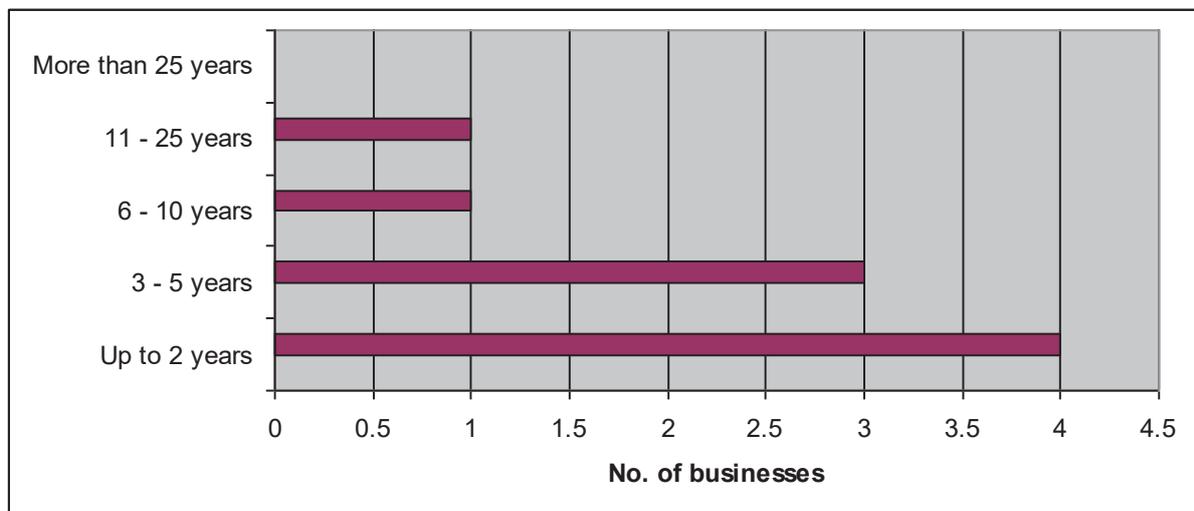
2. How many staff do you employ on average?



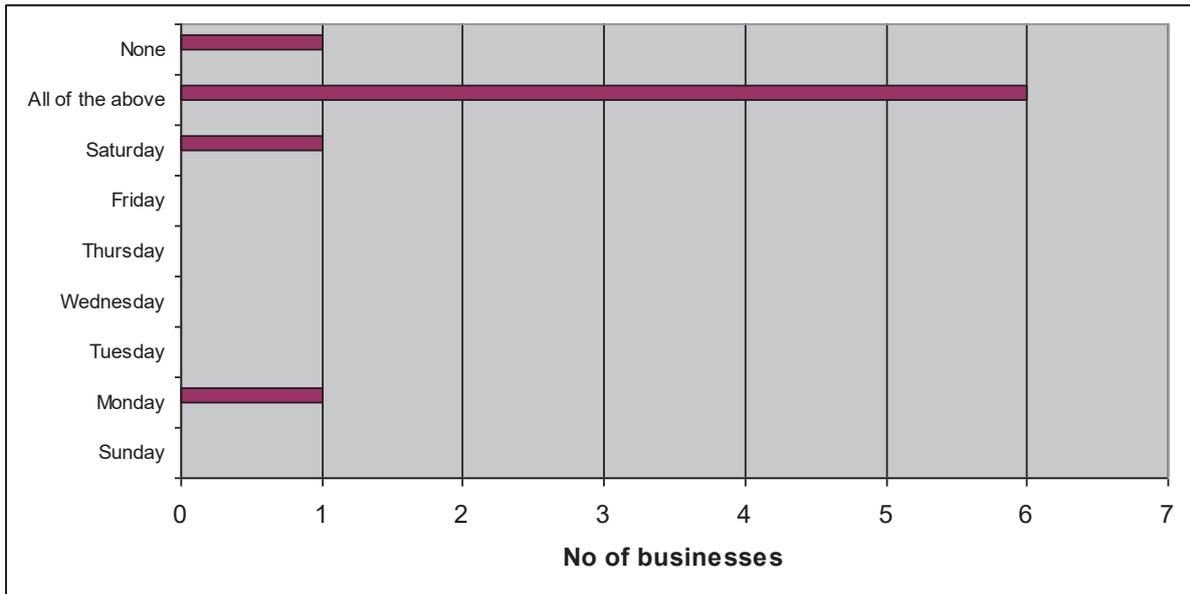
3. Which months of the year are you closed?



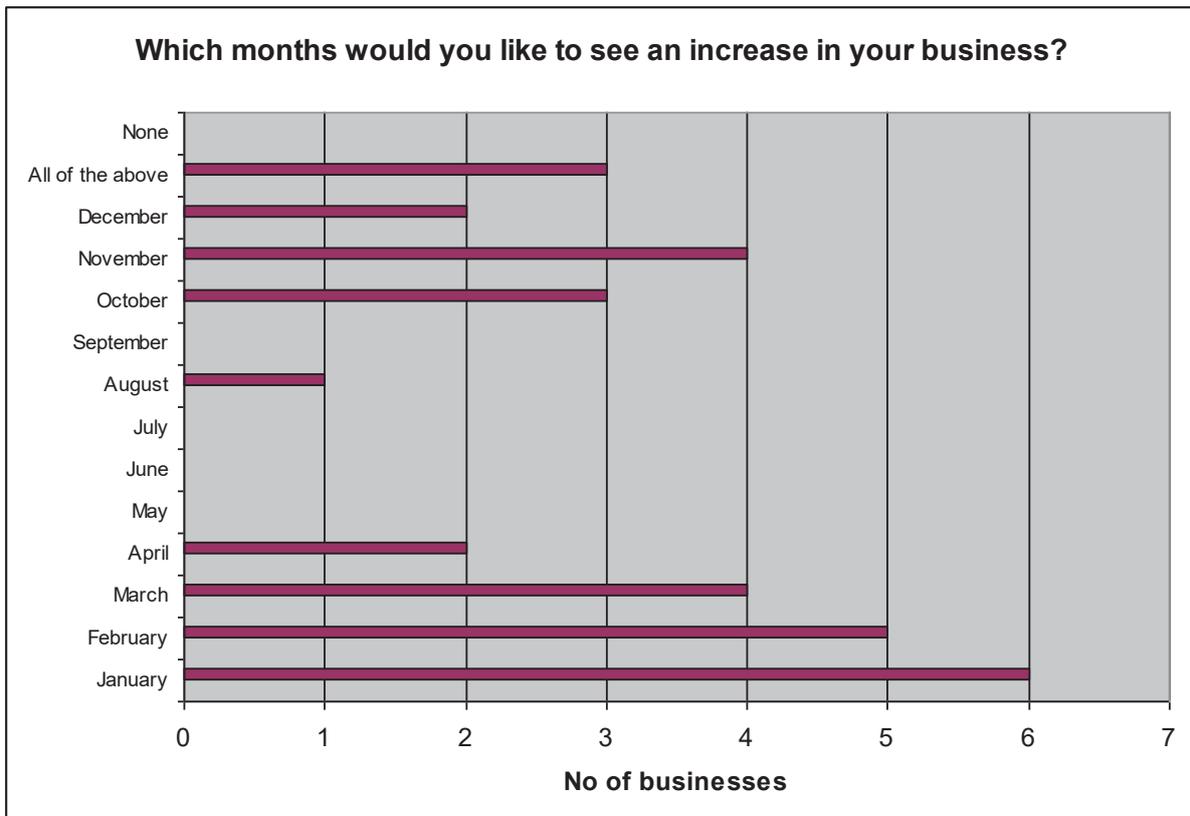
4. For how many years have you operated in this business?



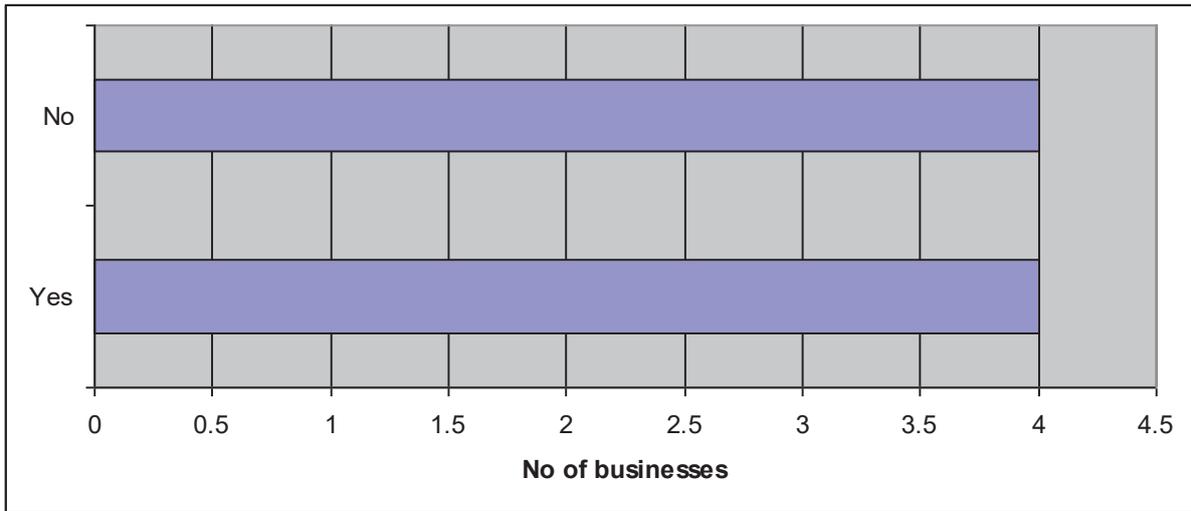
5. Are there any particular times of the week that you would like to see an increase in your business?



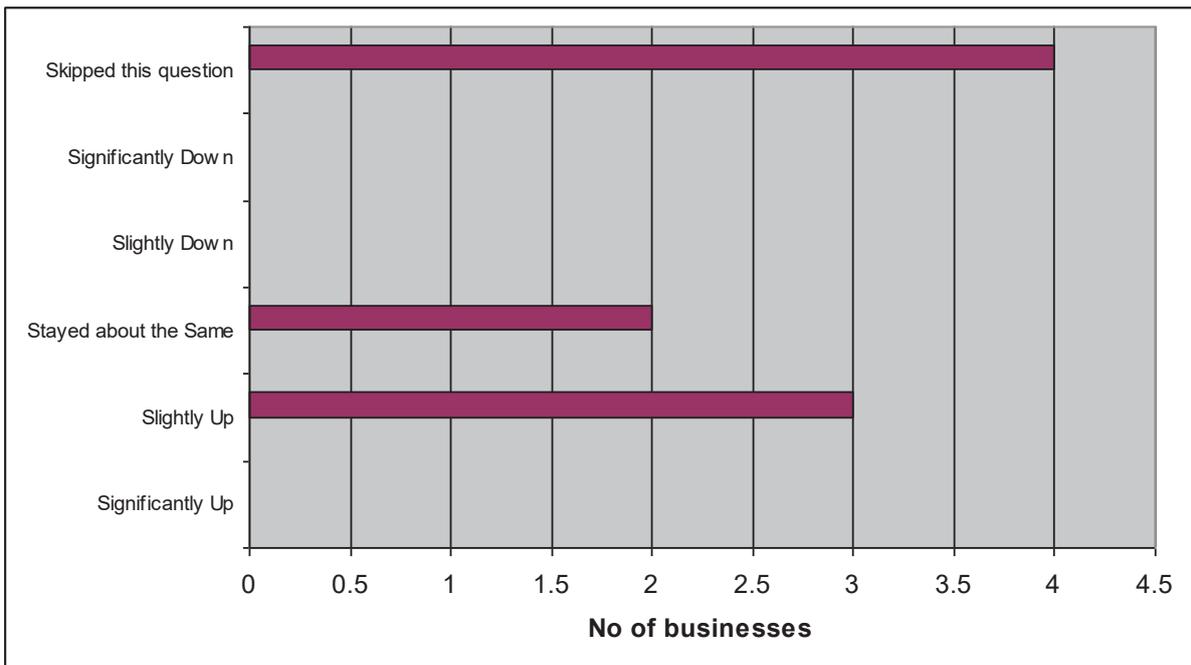
6. Which months would you like to see an increase in your business?



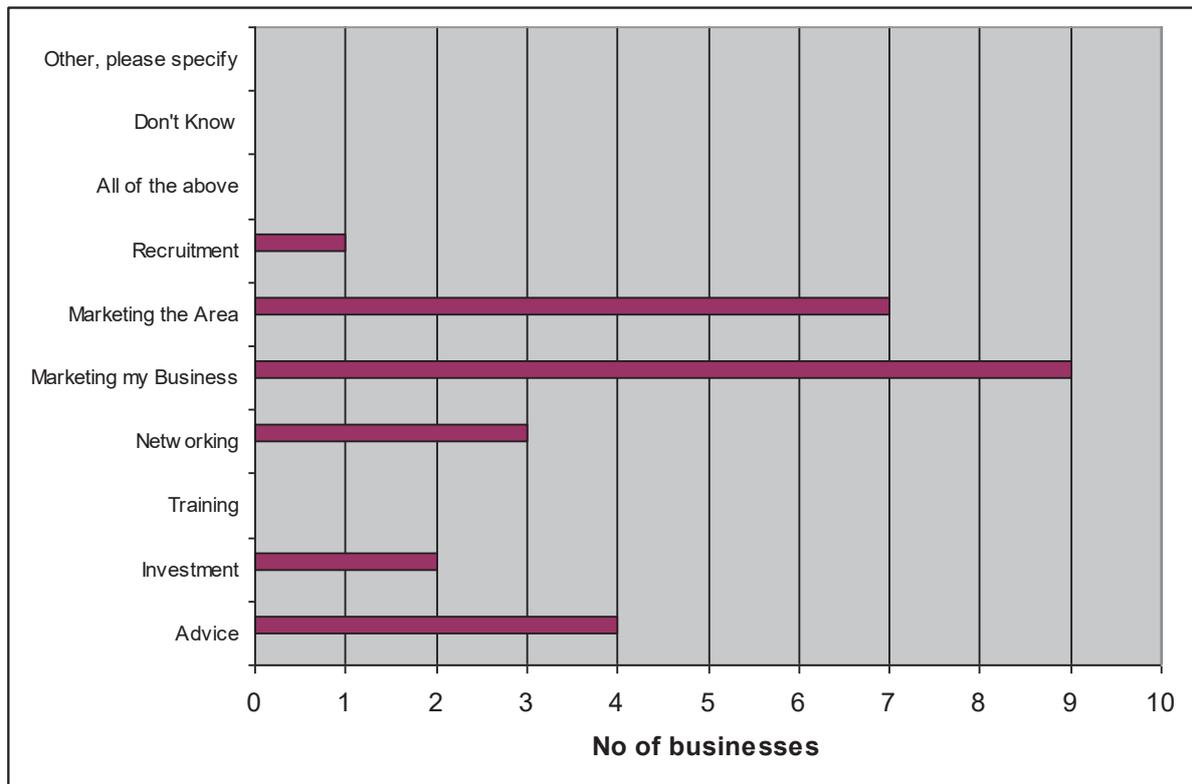
7. Do you have any expansion development plans for your business?



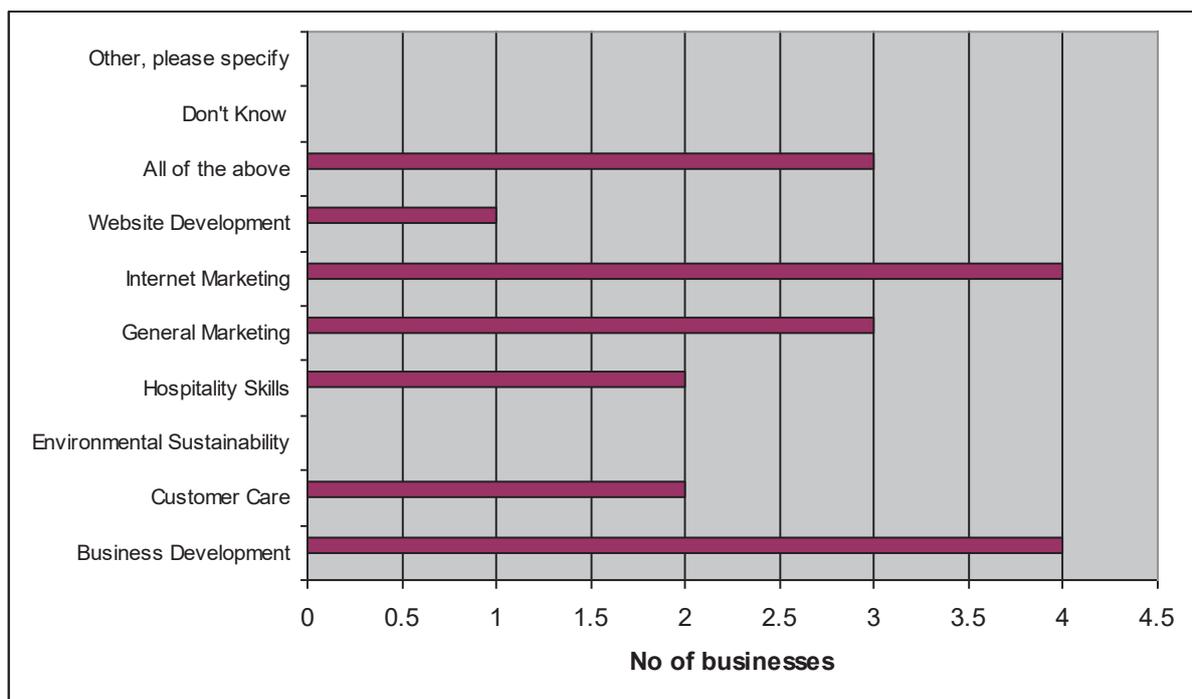
8. What has been the trend in your profitability in the past three years?



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



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



4. Appendix 3 - Segmentation

4.1. Functionals

Brian and 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.

4.2. Habituals

Frank and 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.

4.3. Traditionals.

Robert and 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.

4.4. Cosmopolitans

Jake and 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.

4.5. Discoverers

Adrian and 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.

5. Appendix 5 - Tourism Audit

5.1. 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 will be 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.

5.2. Definition of area

Amble is defined within an approximate radius of 1 mile from the town edge

5.3. Accommodation

	Number	No. of bedspaces, units or pitches	Number officially quality inspected
Hotels			
Guesthouses/B&Bs	5	38 bedspaces	5
Inns or pubs with accommodation			
Self-Catering businesses	12	16 units	9
Caravan & Camping sites	1	27 pitches	1
Youth or other hostels			
Other group accommodation			

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

Lack of hotel to accommodate significant numbers of visitors

5.4. 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	Warkworth Castle	All year round	
Museums; Heritage centres			
Churches of interest to visitors			
Animal/wildlife attractions inc. nature reserves	Coquet Island – RSPB protected	All year round – camera access via TIC during from March - Sept	
Farm attractions			
Gardens			
Railway, transport attractions			
Country parks, woodlands, special countryside sites	Druridge Bay Country Park Hallbank Well	All year round	
Craft centres			
Other	East Cemetery Spire Traditional shopping – Queen St Town Square		

	AONB/ SSSI Blue Flag beaches Town Trail		

Festivals and Events

Date	Event	Details
12 – 13 July 2008 (Every July)	Amble Sea Fayre Festival	Fun, family weekend – Northumbrian food, live music, childrens amusements, themed entertainment, traditional trawler race.
3rd Sunday in Nov	Amble Christmas Lights	Procession of community groups with the switching on of the town’s christmas lights.
August Bank Holiday	Hauxley Fair	Monday – small village fair, tombola, BBQ,
2 nd week September	Slaters Fun Fair	Fun Fair for a week on the Littleshore
Various	Druridge Bay	Numerous events held throughout the year

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

Spring events lacking

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

Generally yes, although we could make better use of our seaside attraction with more events held there. Fishing events have started to take place again in Feb.

5.6. Retail

Shops

Retail type	No. of shops	Names (omit if too many to list)	No. of which in each quality category				
			5	4	3	2	1
Speciality Food	4	RC Rolland and Son The Farm Shop J and J Seafood Bread Bin					
Antiques	1	The Colony					
Books	1	The BookWorm at Amble Post Office					
Arts / Crafts	3	JK Crafts The Pin Cushion Coastal Colour					

		(stationery)					
Gift	1	Flower Centre					
Outdoor/Leisure							
Clothing	4	Forresters Leannes The Baby Shop Raggy Dolls					
Garden centres/ nurseries	2	Lawrences Popular Pet Supplies					
Other Speciality or 'destination' shops	1	Jet Amusements					

Markets

Market type	name	regularity	day(s) of week	5	4	3	2	1
Outdoor	General Market	Outdoor Weekly	Sunday					
Indoor								
Speciality								

Eating out

	No.	Names (omit if too many to list)	5	4	3	2	1
Restaurants	0						
Take-aways	9	Chinese x2					

		Indian Pizza x 2 Fish + Chips x4					
Cafes/tea shops	3	Olives Tea Room and Coffee Shop The Cedar Café Jaspers					
Pubs serving food	7	Wellwood Blue Bell The Marina Arms The Granary The Harbour The Schooner Pier 81					
Other	2	The Bread Bin (specialist bakery) The Stuffed Roll (sandwich					

		shop)					
Vacant shops							
How many vacant shops are there in the town currently?			4				
Sunday opening							
How many shops are open on Sundays?			8				
How many eating places are open on Sundays?			8				
Early evenings							
How many shops are open in the early evening 5pm-7pm?			4				
How many eating places are open in the early evening?			10				
Half day closing							
How many shops observe a half day closing?			6				
Which day of the week?			Wednesday				

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

No sit down restaurant in evening

Co-Op monopoly on food

Sports, outdoor activity and entertainment facilities

Facility	Name	Brief details	Quality grading				
			5	4	3	2	1
Leisure centre/ gym	The Granary Leisure Centre No Limits	Small gym Small gym					
Swimming pool	The Granary	Open to public					
Golf							
Long distance footpaths	Amble – Hauxley Amble - Warkworth Warkworth to Alnmouth (Cycle route too)						
Other named walks							
Bicycle hire	Summer only						
Cycle routes	Amble to Warkworth then Warkorth to Alnmouth (Sustrans)						
Riding/pony trekking							
Special riding routes							

Fishing	Pier in Amble						
Sailing	Coquet ShoreBase Trust Marina						
Canoeing	Coquet Shorebase Trust						
Other outdoor activities, sports	Tennis/football at Welfare Playground and paddling pool at Paddlers						
Theatre							
Cinema*							
Other entertainment facilities	DVD hire						

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

Apart from pubs there are no evening entertainment provision in town

5.7. Support facilities and infrastructure

Car parking

	Free	Short stay	Long stay
No. of car parks	4		4

No. of spaces in total	140		140
	Free 2	Metered 2	
On street parking places (approx)			

Coach Parking

	Location	capacity
Location(s) for dropping off passengers		
Location(s) for coach parking		
Estimated no. of coaches visiting the town each week?	Over a year - near 40 coaches in total	
<p>Any related issues?</p> <p>No official designated areas for coach parking – tends to be adhoc but coaches park near the Town Square.</p>		

Other transport facilities

No.s and locations of bicycle racks/storage	
Location of central bus station/shelter	Church Street

Facilities available at bus station/shelter	Time Sheet – disabled access
No. of daily buses linking to other towns	518 Alnwick to Newcastle 420 Ashington /Newcastle
Distance from town centre to nearest railway station	Alnmouth (for Alnwick) which is about 5 miles from Amble

Public toilets

Toilet location	Amble Tourist Info Centre	Harbour	
Opening hours	Mon – Sun 9 till 4	Mon – Sun 9 till 4	
free/paid	Free	Free	
disabled access yes/no	Yes	Yes	
baby changing yes/no	NO	NO	

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

Possibly not enough toilet provision.

6. Visitor Information Centre

Does your town have a VIC/ TIC?	Yes	If not, where is your nearest centre?	
Location	Queen St, Amble	Contact Name	Jackie Griffiths
Telephone Number	01665 712313	Email Address	ambletic@alnwick.gov.uk

Enquiry type:	Total Number of Enquiries ³		
	2005	2006	2007
Counter	27430	28378	21113
Postal	231	800	118
Telephone	4041	2877	2193
Email	1130	375	383
Accommodation bookings	287	172	107

Please estimate proportions of enquiries from each of:

	%
Local residents	30%
UK visitors	68%
Overseas visitors	2%

³ It should be recognised that the drop in the number of recorded enquiries between 2006 and 2007 is due to the fact that this was when the funding to keep the TIC open during the winter came to an end.

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?

Computer would be useful at the TIC for visitors to look up information e.g. weather reports for sailing

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

Overall, quite well although there is no provision during the winter months (TIC)



7. Tourist Information Points (TIPs)

Number in town:

**As of April 2008 there will be 3
"Town Trail" boards in place**

Locations			
Content of each e.g. maps, adverts, events			
Is it well maintained?			
Who is responsible for maintenance?			
Is the content appropriate and up to date?			
Are there any additional locations where a TIP is needed?			

8. Interpretation

Is there any interpretation around the town?	Details
Boards or panels at key sites or on key buildings of interest	
Plaques on specific buildings	
Signed tours or trails around the town	
Regular guided tours around the town	
Other interpretation materials	

<p>Who is responsible for maintenance of panels, plaques and signs?</p>
<p>Are there any gaps where further / new interpretative materials could be provided?</p>

9. Visitor Pedestrian Signposting

	Location 1	Location 2	Location 3	Location 4
Location or start point				
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"/>			

10. Road signposting for visitors

	Route 1	Route 2	Route 3	Route 4
starting point				
finishing point				
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"/>			
<i>- Record any details / location</i>				
Signposting to the Tourist Information Centre	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>			
<i>- Record any details / location</i>				
Signposting for main attractions?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>			
<i>- Record any details / location</i>				
Signposting for visitor car parks?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>			
<i>- Record any details / location</i>				
Signposting for public toilets?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>			
<i>- Record any details / location</i>				
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"/>			
<i>- Record any details / location</i>				

Continuity of signposting				
Where facilities are signposted, does this remain consistent along the routes?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>			
Quality of signing.				
Are the signs appropriately maintained	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>			
Visually- are they clear/obscured	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"/>			
Note details for reporting to Highway authority				