UNIVERSITY OF WESTMINSTER

WestminsterResearch

http://www.wmin.ac.uk/westminsterresearch

The role of English local authorities in tourism survey 2000.

Nancy Stevenson
Sarah Lovatt

Centre for Tourism, School of Architecture and the Built Environment,
University of Westminster

The research team was led by Nancy Stevenson, Senior Lecturer, and research was carried out with Sarah Lovatt, Researcher.

Available online through WestminsterResearch:

http://westminsterresearch.wmin.ac.uk/5577/

**The Role of
English Local Authorities
In Tourism
Survey 2000**

**University of Westminster
Centre for Tourism
School of the Built Environment
35 Marylebone Road
London NW1 5LS**

May 2001

Contents

List of Figures   **Page**

List of Appendices

Summary

- The majority (80%) of local authorities surveyed have a written tourism policy. Tourism policy is most commonly articulated within a tourism strategy but is also commonly expressed within economic development plans and land use plans.

- The top five policy priorities are: promotion/marketing of area, sustainability, product development, economic development/regeneration and improvements in the quality of attractions/product.

- Within the organisation of local authorities, tourism is increasingly located within service areas which span traditional boundaries (identified as strategic/executive/management areas) or multifunctional departments. Where tourism services are linked to one service area they are increasingly located with economic development/regeneration service areas. There is a trend towards tourism activities being located within emerging departments or service areas such as community, marketing and promotions, and rather than leisure and recreation services.

- Over half of the local authorities surveyed had significant tourism development in their area, indicating the growing significance of tourism in most areas of England. Many of these felt that their areas would benefit from additional tourism expansion in the way of facilities and services.

- The majority of local authority tourism officers had a very positive attitude towards tourism, for example, in the provision of jobs and the relative minor adverse effect tourism has on the environment or in contributing to overcrowding on the roads. There was a mixed response to whether the DCMS's strategy for tourism *'Tomorrow's Tourism'* had had an influence on local tourism policy.

- There has been a steady rise in the amount of research carried out since 1996, a third of all research mentioned in the survey had been carried out in 1999 (the year DCMS's *'Tomorrow's Tourism'* had been published). The most cited type of research surveyed visitor numbers followed by visitor spending and visitor types. The sample size of the majority of research was small (between 500-1000), and some local authorities based their research on regional or national trends.

- A significant number of local authorities (28%) with a written tourism policy had not carried out any type of research. These local authorities base the objectives of their local tourism strategy or policy on regional and national intelligence.

- Tourism budgets have fallen slightly since 1998-9 but have remained fairly constant over the past 3 years. The number of authorities with no tourism budget has fallen from 14% to 6% over the period. However the percentage of authorities with very small tourism budgets (less than £10,000) has increased from 8% to 21% .

- The majority of local authorities (81%) cite partnerships with private and/or voluntary sectors as examples of good practice, indicating that the creation and sustaining of partnerships has become an important component of tourism

policy. Almost three-quarters of local authorities had strong communication links with their Regional Tourist Board, but half had weak links with the newly formed Regional Development Agencies, and only a third had strong links with their local residents.

CHAPTER 1   INTRODUCTION

1.1   Introduction to Report

This report analyses the role of English local authorities in tourism policy making, implementation and research. The term 'tourism' is used in accordance with common definitions, and can be taken to broadly mean the promotion, development and co-ordination of both domestic and international tourism activity in an area. The term "local authorities" is used to cover all sub regional authorities and includes London Boroughs, County Councils, Metropolitan Councils, District Councils and Unitary Authorities.

The last decade has seen many changes for local authorities. These include the election of a Labour government with a new approach to tourism, the publication of a tourism strategy *'Tomorrow's Tourism'*, Scottish and Welsh devolution, new regional institutions (Regional Development Agencies and regional chambers) and regional programme initiatives. There have also been changes in tourism administration arrangements, for example, the divorce of the British Tourist Authority from the English Tourist Board, and the latter's change to the English Tourism Council. Moreover, there has been an increase in tourism development and visitation; sustainability has been a key issue, and as traditional industries such as agriculture and manufacturing decline in many areas of England, local authorities have been reviewing and promoting their resources.

Local authorities play an important role both directly in promoting and developing tourism in their areas and indirectly as providers of much of the infrastructure and services that impact upon visitors and their overall experience.

This survey focuses on those local authorities covered by the English Tourism Council. This approach was taken in view of the differing organisational and policy framework emerging in respect of tourism which has arisen from Scottish and Welsh devolution, The survey considers role and approaches of local authorities to tourism in the context of a rapidly changing environment. The findings of this survey are intended to inform the actors involved in tourism policy development at local, regional and national levels and to encourage debate and discussion about tourism organisation, and policy making.

1.2   Aim and Objectives

The aim of the study is to analyse the role of local authorities in tourism policy making, implementation and research. Central to this study is the question of the emphasis placed by local authorities on tourism policy making.

In order to accomplish the report's aim, six objectives were set:

- ***To examine the organisation of tourism policy making and implementation within local authorities.***

- ***To determine the extent and type of local authority tourism policy and local authority involvement in tourism.***

- ***To examine tourism policy objectives of Local Authorities.***

- ***To ascertain the level of tourism monitoring research currently being carried out by local authorities.***

- ***To evaluate the allocation of tourism budgets and trends.***

- ***To determine good practice and implementation of tourism policies by local authorities.***

1.3   Methodology

A previous study on local authority tourism was carried out a decade ago entitled *'The UK Local Authority Tourism Survey 1991'* by Greg Richards and was produced by The Centre for Leisure and Tourism Studies (CELTs) and The British Association of Tourism Officers. The Richards Survey 1991 provided baseline data and several of the questions of this survey were framed with this in mind. The findings of this 2000 survey are thus discussed with some emphasis on the changes since the former survey. It was noted that in the Richards Survey 1991 the sample had included Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland as well as England, however, by far the majority of respondents were local authorities in England (81%). Although a comparative approach in research can provide a useful methodology for the study of tourism, caution must be exercised when comparing the findings of both surveys. For example, there are difficulties in acquiring comparative statistical data in the light of changing administrative, political, cultural, social and economic environments in which tourism policy making takes place. Nevertheless the research team considered that some of the ideas and concepts adopted and the lessons considered in the former study could be re-evaluated and their applicability discussed in respect of the recent study.

1.3.1 The Questionnaire

In order to fulfil the objectives of the study, data was gathered and analysed using a postal survey as the research instrument. This was considered to be the most efficient and practical way of obtaining and overview of the role of tourism in the diverse local authorities in England.

The questionnaire consisted of 15 questions, which were either open-ended, closed or nominal. Both the DCMS and the LGA gave advice on the questionnaire design,

as well as members of the Centre for Tourism at the University of Westminster, and subsequent drafts were modified to accommodate their comments. The questions were carefully considered in order to keep the questionnaire brief and succinct and to facilitate questionnaire completion and thus encourage a good response.

The final questionnaire (as shown in Appendix 1) contained questions, which covered a range of issues relating to the role of local authorities in tourism policy making. These included the organisation of tourism within local authorities, tourism policy, attitudes towards tourism, tourism monitoring research, budgets for tourism, examples of good practice and communication links between particular sectors.

A pilot study was carried out on several local authorities in order to obtain valuable feedback. This pilot study led to amendments to several questions to ensure that they were concise, clear, appropriate and unambiguous.

1.3.2 The Sample

The questionnaire was posted on 31st March 2000 to all London Boroughs, County Councils, Metropolitan Councils, District Councils and Unitary Authorities in England (389 local authorities in total). All of the local authorities in England were sent a questionnaire, as it was felt necessary by the research team to obtain a response from the diversity of local authorities, with respect to size and administrative structure, as well as level of tourism visitation and reactions to tourism. The addresses were obtained from the latest Municipal Year Book (1999). Where appropriate, the questionnaire was addressed to the Tourism Officer, and if unknown, the Chief Executive's office, as it was felt that in this way it would be more likely to be passed onto the relevant department or officer.

A covering letter (Appendix II) explained the purpose of the study and requested the return of the questionnaire by 17th April. The initial response rate was low so telephone reminders were made and the questionnaire together with a reminder letter was circulated at the end of 26th April, with a revised deadline of 17th May. This action enabled a more satisfactory result, with the survey yielding a total of 219 returned questionnaires (out of 389), which represented 56% of local authorities in England. It was noted that one of the difficulties in following up the questionnaire was the fast turnover of staff responsible for tourism in many of local authorities and in some cases local authorities' outsourced the tourism function. The response rate of 56% was considered a favourable result to adequately represent the local authorities in England. There were replies from all the five types of local authorities (London Boroughs, County Councils, Metropolitan Councils, District Councils and Unitary Councils). Nevertheless, there was a higher response rate from County Councils and the District Councils, 88% and 86% respectively (Figure 1). Just over a half of the London Boroughs and the Metropolitan Councils responded, while only 22% of the Unitary Councils returned the questionnaire.

Figure 1: Response to the Survey: Percentage of Type of Local Authority

Type of Local Authority	Frequency	Percentage of type of local authority
London Borough	17/33	52%
County Councils	30/34	88%
Metropolitan Councils	20/37	54%
District Councils	119/138	86%
Unitary Councils	33/147	22%

CHAPTER 2   TOURISM ORGANISATION

Figure 2 Departmental Responsibility for Tourism

Single Service Areas/ Departments	% Authorities 2000	% Authorities 1991 *taken from Richards Survey
Economic Development/ Regeneration	21	16
Leisure	12	28
Executive/Strategic/Management	11	-
Community	6	-
Planning	4	15
Marketing and Promotions	4	-
Tourism	3	6
Environment	3	-
Policy and Resources	2	6
Recreation	-	9
Other	34	20
Total	100	100

Figure 3 Departmental Responsibility for Tourism -Multifunctional Service Areas

Multifunctional Services/Departments	% Authorities 2000
Tourism and Leisure	2
Leisure, Education, Culture and Tourism	6
Leisure, Economy, Regeneration and Tourism	3
Leisure and Community	3
Leisure, Tourism and Environment	3
Envrionment and Planning	2

Envrionment and Community	1
Economy and Community	3
Economy and Planning	1
Other	7
Total Multifunctional Services	**31**
Crosses boundaries/outside main structure	1
In process of reorganisation	2

The study carried out by Greg Richards for CELTs in 1991 identified tourism as an activity did not fit easily into local authority departmental structures. Since the 1991 survey central government has initiated and implemented wide reaching changes to the way in which local authorities manage, organise and deliver services culminating in the post 1997 Labour administration's commitment to "modernise" local government.

A number of local authorities surveyed had, or were in the process of, reorganising from a traditional "departmental" structure. Many did not use the term "department" to describe the organisational units which formulate/implement policies and deliver services. In the remainder of this section these organisational units are referred to as service units in an attempt to encompass the diverse terminology.

There are a broad range of approaches to identifying the most appropriate service area or grouping of service areas for tourism services. The survey shows that tourism is increasingly linked and located within administrative areas which span traditional local authority areas (i.e. strategic/executive/management areas) . Where tourism services are linked to one service area they are increasingly located with economic development/regeneration service areas. There is a trend towards tourism activities being located within emerging service areas such as community, marketing and promotions and environment and away from leisure and recreation services.

The survey also revealed the growing diversity of services groupings involved in the delivery of tourism services. In particular the survey highlighted the emerging importance of multi functional service groupings (31% of local authorities surveyed deliver tourism services through multifunctional service areas/departments). Local authority appear to be reorganising to provide structures to integrate approaches to policy making across traditional functional boundaries in accordance with advice from Central Government.

The changes identified represent a major shift in the ways in which tourism is perceived by local authorities, recognising wider economic, environmental and social implications of tourism activity. The changes also indicate local government is moving into non traditional areas (marketing and promotion) to deliver tourism services.

Cttee Structures

At the time of the survey a number **(how many….)** of authorities had already reorganised or were in the process of reorganisation from a committee structure to a cabinet structure. Local authorities which had not yet adopted new committee

structures generally appeared to be organised on the basis of multi (disciplinary) faceted cttee structures.

Committee Structure

CHAPTER 3   TOURISM POLICY

3.1   Adoption of a Written Tourism Policy

The survey revealed that the majority (80%) of local authorities surveyed have a written tourism policy, as shown in Figure 4, with an additional 8% of respondents indicating that their local authority was in the process of adopting a tourism policy. Although the proportion of authorities with a tourism policy has increased since the Richards Survey of 1991, which had found that 74% of local authorities surveyed had an adopted tourism policy, the increase has slowed. Richards (1991) pointed out that there had been a high incidence of tourism policy formulation between 1987 and 1990, possibly due to the requirement for tourism to be included in Structure Plans and Unitary Development plans as well as the growing economic emphasis placed on tourism.

The 2000 survey indicated that London Boroughs, Unitary and District Councils were more likely to have written tourism policies than Metropolitan and County Councils (see Figure 3).

Figure 4: Local Authorities' Adoption of Tourism Policy

Position	Percentage of respondents	
Authorities with a written tourism policy.	80%	
Authorities in process of adopting a written tourism policy.	8%	
No tourism policy, due to: • Tourism being considered insignificant or not a priority. • No tourism policy due to lack resources.	9%	5% 4%
Not specified	3%	

A number of respondents (9%) indicated that their authority did not have a specific tourism policy. Although this would appear a small number, the research team felt that those local authorities with a tourism officer/team and tourism policy were more likely to have replied to this survey.   Authorities without a tourism officer were considered likely to be less involved in direct tourism activities and policy making. Therefore it is possible that a significant proportion of those who did not respond to the survey, do not have a written tourism policy.

The most cited reason given by respondents for not having a tourism policy was that tourism in their area was considered by the authority as either too insignificant or not a priority. Other authorities referred to a lack of resources, for example, funding and staffing, as the main reason for not adopting a tourism policy.

Figure 5: Type of Local Authority with Written Tourism Policy.

Local Authority type	% of local authority type which have a written tourism policy	As a fraction
London Borough	88%	15/17
County Council	57%	17/30
Metropolitan Council	75%	15/20
District Council	84%	100/119
Unitary	88%	29/33

3.2 Type of Policy

The local authorities were asked to indicate the type of policy they had which related to tourism. In many cases, more than one type of policy was stated. A tourism strategy was the most frequently mentioned followed by economic development policy and tourism section in land use/planning policy. This result highlights the variety of ways in which tourism policy is expressed which arises from the multifunctional nature of tourism activities. It also identifies developments in tourism policy making, including the increasing popularity of strategy documents as a way of articulating tourism policy and the development of tourism as a policy area in its own right rather than a minor part of economic development, land use or leisure policy. Other types of policy that related to tourism which were identified by respondents included cultural and heritage strategies, service delivery and local performance plans.

Figure 6: Frequency of Type of Policy

Type of Policy	Frequency	% of L.A.'s with tourism policy
• **Tourism strategy**	173	98
• **Economic development policy**	95	54
• **Tourism section in land use/planning policy**	60	34
• **Leisure policy**	38	22
• **Visitor management plan**	12	7
• **Other**	19	11

Interestingly, the London boroughs (82%) and the unitary authorities (79%) were more likely to have a specific tourism strategy, although district councils (69%) and metropolitan councils (65%) followed closely behind (see Figure 7 below). Approximately half of each type of local authority expressed their tourism objectives through an economic development policy, with unitary authorities being more likely to have this type of policy than the metropolitan councils. Just under one half of London boroughs had a tourism section in a land use/planning policy, while only 5% of metropolitan councils had such a provision. The unitaries were more likely to have a leisure policy (27%) and/or a visitor management plan (9%) compared with the types of local authorities.

Figure 7: Percentage* of each Type of Local Authority with each Type of Tourism Policy (Frequency in brackets)

	London Borough	County Council	Metropolitan Council	District Council	Unitary
• **Tourism Strategy**	82% (14)	43% (13)	65% (13)	69% (82)	79% (26)
• **Economic Development Policy**	47% (8)	47% (14)	35% (7)	40% (48)	55% (18)
• **Section in planning policy**	47% (8)	33% (10)	5% (1)	26% (31)	30% (10)
• **Leisure Policy**	6% (1)	0% (0)	10% (2)	22% (26)	27% (9)
• **Visitor Management Plan**	0% (0)	3% (1)	0% (0)	7% (8)	9% (3)
• **Other**	6% (1)	10% (3)	15% (3)	6% (7)	15% (5)

NB Not all local authorities answered this question, and some respondents had more than one answer.

3.3 Tourism Policy Objectives

Local authorities, which had a written tourism policy, were asked to identify their five major objectives in order of importance. Approximately 150 (87%) local authorities with a tourism policy were able to state their objectives or state their policy aim. Respondents were asked to list their five main policy objectives in rank order of importance.

In order to obtain an overview of the ranking of policies for all respondents, frequencies of particular policy priorities were calculated. Five points were given to the policy objective if considered to be the first objective, four points for the second objective, three points for the third objective, two points for the fourth objective, one point for fifth objective. The survey revealed some interesting findings (as shown in Figure 8) and some subtle changes in tourism policy objective priorities over the last decade.

The ranking of policy objectives indicated that promotion/marketing of an area was regarded as the highest priority. This was followed by sustainability issues, product development, economic development/regeneration, improvement in quality of attractions/tourism product, the encouraging or sustaining of partnerships, increasing visitor spend, providing employment, increasing visitor numbers, and carrying out research.

The next sections will discuss these priorities and will include discussion on the similarities and dissimilarities with the previous local authority tourism research carried out by the Richards Survey in 1991. The 1991 survey asked respondants to list their top 6 tourism policy objectives in order of priority and the scoring system adopted gave 6 points for the first objective, 5 points for their second objective etc. The 2000 survey used the same scoring system but asked authorities to list 5 main objectives of policy in order of importance and allocated 5 points for their first objective etc. It is therefore possible make comparisons between the rank order of policy priorities between the two surveys. The 1991 survey investigated UK local authorities, however the results of the survey were shown under the headings, England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. The ranking of priorities identified in respect of English Authorities are compared with the findings of this study.

Figure 8: Tourism Policy Objective Priorities of Local Authorities in England

Policy Objective	Frequency	Rank (in 2000)	Rank (1991 survey)
• Promotion/marketing of area	333	1	4
• Sustainability	292	2	10 (visitor management)
• Product development	238	3	7
• Economic development/regeneration	212	4	
• Improve quality of attractions/product	187	5	2
• Encourage/sustain partnerships	151	6	9
• Increase visitor spend	118	7	1
• Provide employment	92	8	3
• Increase visitor numbers	88	9	8
• Carry out research	63	10	
• Provide visitor information/centres	60	11	6
• Increase range of accommodation	52	12	
• Attract investment in tourism	47	13	
• Encourage residents to use leisure facilities	24	14	
• Conservation	4	15	5

3.3.1 Promotion/Marketing of Area

The promotion of an area was ranked as the highest priority. This included marketing activity, and improving the image and raising the profile of an area; the latter being particularly emphasised (frequency of 119) indicating the tendency for local authorities to endeavour to realise their tourism potential.

The survey indicates that marketing an area has become an important element in local authority policy. Although promotional activity can attract tourists' income, it is also in many cases, seen as part of a wider strategy to help persuade existing and potential residents and 'footloose' industries (local, regional, national and even

international) that the area is an ideal location in which to live and work. In the Richards Report 1991 survey of local authorities in England, promotion was ranked as 4th, the emphasis at that time being to improve the quality of existing attractions and the tourism product, increasing visitor spend and generating employment (Richards 1991).

During the last decade, local authorities have become increasingly involved in marketing and promotional activity to develop attractive images of their areas to attract investment and visitors. The increased importance of tourism promotion is unsurprising in this context. Local authorities are in a unique position to coordinate the marketing and promotion of tourism amenities, facilities, attractions and activities at destination level.

3.3.2 Sustainability Issues

The survey showed that sustainability issues (ranked 2nd) were at the centre of the majority of tourism policies. During the last decade the concept of sustainable tourism has been seen as the key way forward (by agencies such as the English Tourist Council (ETC), the Countryside Commission and the Rural Development Commission) in balancing the needs of the visitor, the local economy, the environment and the host community. Thus, the sensitive relationship between tourism and the wider environment e.g. community, local businesses and the natural environment has gradually been brought onto local, regional and national political agendas, bringing pressure on authorities to embrace the concept of sustainability in tourism policies, action plans as well as statutory land plans. There have been a number of influential publications relating to sustainability. These include the 1994 English Historic Towns Forum (EHTF) *Getting it Right – a Guide to Visitor Management in Historic Towns*, and more recently, *Making the Connections – A Practical Guide to Tourism Management in Historic Towns* by ETC, English Heritage and EHTF in 1999. These along with Agenda 21 look at ways local authorities can find sustainable solutions to a wide range of local issues, while the recent Government strategy *'Tomorrow's Tourism'* (1999) sets out a sustainable tourism strategy for the industry and brings tourism further into the wider sustainability debate.

The 2000 survey revealed that since the Richards Report 1991 tourism is being considered in light of its social impacts and its relationship/acceptability with the local community, a principal which underlies the process of sustainable tourism. Tourism activities are increasingly located in service areas with a community function (13%).

In the survey the concept of 'sustainability' was interpreted in a number of ways as shown in Figure. At the time of the Richards Report 1991, the terms 'conservation' and 'visitor management' (then ranked 5th and 10th respectively) were more frequently utilised rather than the more generic term 'sustainability' to cover environmental and tourism impact issues. **In essence, there has been a redefinition of similar concepts.** *[Graham].*

Figure 9 Interpretation of Sustainability

Policy	Number of times mentioned	As a percentage
• Create/sustain/promote sustainable tourism destination/product	16	19%
• Visitor management policies	15	18%
• Sustainability/Sustainable tourism	13	15%
• Protect/enhance quality of environment/life	13	15%
• Represent interests of local tourism industry	8	10%
• Achieve balance between stakeholders e.g. community, environment, tourism industry etc.	8	10%
• Encourage use of public transport/minimise congestion	6	7%
• Sustainable Development	5	6%
Total	84	100%

3.3.3 Product Development

Product development was emphasised as important (ranked 3rd) and has increased in priority since 1991. There have been a number of factors, which have contributed to the growth in tourism attractions. These include changes in demand, for example, increases in affluence and leisure time, easier access to destinations; increase in car ownership, a growing interest in Britain's cultural regions and in all types of heritage i.e. natural and man-made. The tourism industry has responded to these changes by innovating and increasing in the number of new tourism products and tourist destinations e.g. theme parks, farm tourism, inland holiday centres and time-share developments (Davidson & Maitland 1997). There has also been an increase in private sector investment in tourism, with private/public sector initiatives making a significant contribution to tourism product development. A number of new attractions have been developed in partnership to mark the Millennium, encouraged by public sector funding.

3.3.4 Economic Development/Regeneration

Economic development/regeneration as an objective (ranked 4th) included such issues as the maximising economic benefit from tourism, widening and strengthening the economic base, physical regeneration, economic regeneration and the support of rural communities and economies. Although economic development implies the generating of employment, many respondents specified 'providing employment' separately (see Figure above) and this is further discussed in Section 4.1.1. However many of the respondents used the term 'economic development' to encompass the generating of direct employment, indirect employment and income for local businesses, as well as promoting new types of investment to encourage 'footloose' industries and to establish a strong services sector, such as finance, law, accountancy and retail. As traditional industries such

agriculture and manufacturing have declined, many places have turned to promoting their resources to attract visitors in order to strength or sustain the local economy. As shown in Chapter 2 tourism activities are increasingly located in economic development/regeneration service areas and in Figure 7 that tourism policy is often articulated through economic development policy documents.

As mentioned, in the survey the provision of employment through tourism was frequently specified separately from economic development. However, it must be noted that economic development involves the sustaining or creating of employment, therefore, when combined with 'providing employment' it can be seen that the provision of employment is one of the most important objectives among local authorities – ranked 2nd. This result is not dissimilar to the findings of The Richards Survey (1991) which indicated that "generating employment" was ranked third together with "tourism marketing".

3.3.5   Improvement of Quality of Attractions/Product
[Nancy working on}
The quality of the visitor experience remains a high priority, in light of the increased need for service quality and value for money and for time. The Richards Report 1991 showed that improvement of visitor facilities was a high priority, ranked 2nd, while the 2000 survey showed that an improvement in quality of attractions and tourism product remained important but was now ranked 5th. LG as provider of attractions LG Act 1999 –implementing the new statutory duty to achieve "Best Value" in the delivery of services.

Info on benchmarking "best value- improving quality of visitor experience
***info from insights**

3.3.6   Encouraging and Sustaining Partnerships

Local authorities are in a position to bring together a variety of tourism stakeholders (businesses, residents, amenity societies as well as regional tourist boards etc), and to make formal arrangements between these stakeholders to develop and implement tourism policies and services at the destination level. These formal arrangements are generally based on partnerships which tend to be drawn from public, private and voluntary sectors. The awareness of the benefits of partnerships, for example, the pooling together of resources, reliance on asome sunding initiatives on a partnership approach and UK strategy documents emphasising the need for partnership in tourism, has meant that the creation and sustaining of partnerships has become an important component of tourism policy.

The encouraging and sustaining of partnerships (ranked 6th) has increased slightly in importance since the Richards report 1991 (then ranked 9th). This small increase may be deceptive as during the late 1980s there were a number of project specific initiatives such as Tourism Development Action Programmes which tended to be on a short-term basis, dissolving once objectives had been achieved. Since 1991 the popularity of the partnership as a way of formalising community involvement is evident from the importance placed on the maintaining and encouraging

partnerships as an objective in local authority tourism policy. In the past, the national tourism organisational structure has not established the specific roles to be played by public and private sectors in policy implementation. Instead the structure has tended to merely co-ordinate private sector initiatives rather than lead private sector activity, nevertheless, the survey revealed that local authorities tended to cite partnership creation as a significant example of good practice (see section 7.1).

3.3.7 Other Objectives

The survey showed that for many local authorities increasing the number of visitors to an area as well as increasing visitor spend remained a significant policy priority. An interesting point was that many included the carrying out of research as a priority, this is particularly important in order that their policies can be based on sound local data. The provision of visitor information and visitor centres, increasing the range of accommodation and attracting investment in tourism also appeared as policy objectives. Many local authorities identified the importance of encouraging the use of tourism and leisure facilities by their local communities as a key priority area.

Other tourism policies mentioned, but to a lesser degree, included creating local awareness and acceptance of the role of tourism in the local economy, education and training within the tourism sector.

3.3   Local Agenda 21

Although non-statutory, the majority (79%) of local authorities had produced a Local Agenda 21 strategy or plan, in response to the Agenda 21 that had been agreed at the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio. London Boroughs were more likely to have produced a Local Agenda 21 plan (see Figure), followed by Metropolitan Councils and Unitary Councils. The survey revealed that the majority (84%) of local authorities with a Local Agenda 21 plan also had a written tourism policy.

Figure 10 Percentage of local authority type with a Local Agenda 21 strategy/plan

Local Authority Type	% of local authority type which have produced a Local Agenda 21 strategy or plan	As a fraction
London Borough	94%	16/17
County Council	67%	20/30
Metropolitan Council	85%	17/20
District Council	74%	88/119
Unitary Councils	85%	28/33

As the Local Agenda 21 is concerned with a range of environmental issues eg. sustainable development, conservation, waste management etc it is unsurprising that the inclusion of a Local Agenda 21 strategy or plan has had an effect on local authority tourism policies. For example, the majority of local authorities (73%) which

had produced a Local Agenda 21 strategy or plan had stated that sustainable issues relating to tourism were a key objective of their written tourism policy.

Chapter 4   ATTITUDES TO TOURISM

4.1   The Statements

During the last two decades, tourism has generally been embraced as a source of economic growth in response to fundamental changes such as economic restructuring. In many cases it has been seen as a way of contributing to meeting national general policy objectives (Baum 1994 p.191), in the face of, for example, declining traditional industries such as manufacturing and agriculture. Research carried out by Baum in 1994 indicated that economic and employment related factors (generation of foreign exchange, provision of employment and regional economic development) were the prime issues affecting national tourism policy-making.

In England tourism has become recognised by the government as a significant influence in shaping the economic futures of regions and localities. Nevertheless, the government has traditionally adopted a more 'laissez-faire' approach to planning and tourism development (Elliott 1997 p.193), taking a more reactive rather than proactive approach. Tourism policy making has been conditioned by the fact that the tourist industry has been largely controlled by private enterprise (Shaw *et al* 1991 p.174), and has been profoundly affected by the differing ideological goals of opposing political parties, for instance "shifts in the debate over the role of the state" (Williams & Montanari 1995 p.7).

The research team set out a set of statements in order to ascertain an indication of tourism officers' attitudes to tourism, and to identify any changes in opinions since the Richards Report.   Respondents were asked whether they agreed strongly, agreed, neither/nor, disagreed or disagreed strongly to the following positive and negative statements on tourism:

- Tourism has provided local jobs
- There is little tourism development in the area.
- Tourism development has led to overcrowding of local roads
- Tourism development has harmed the natural environment.
- This area would benefit from an expansion of tourism facilities/services.
- This area would benefit from an explicit policy statement on its tourism objectives.
- 'Tomorrow's Tourism' has had an influence on tourism policy formulation in this area.

The majority of questionnaires were completed by tourism officers, therefore, it was unsurprising that respondents had a positive attitude towards tourism (see Figure). This should be borne in mind when studying the results of this section.

Figure 11Attitudes to tourism by tourism officers

Statement	Disagree strongly	Disagree	Neither/ nor	Agree	Agree Strongly
Tourism has provided jobs	2%	2%	6%	34%	56%
Little tourism development in area	31%	31%	16%	16%	6%
Overcrowding on roads	22%	38%	29%	9%	2%
Tourism harmed environment	26%	48%	23%	2%	0%
Area benefit from tourism expansion	0%	6%	13%	51%	30%
Area benefit from policy statement	2%	11%	41%	25%	21%
"Tomorrow's Tourism" had an influence	4%	16%	40%	33%	7%

There was a high level of agreement among local authorities over the positive statements on tourism, for example, that 'tourism had provided local jobs', and also a high level of disagreement over the negative statements such as 'tourism development has harmed the natural environment'. The findings relating to each statement are set out in the sections below.

4.1.1 Tourism has provided local jobs

The majority of respondents (90%) agreed or agreed strongly that tourism had provided jobs. This is a similar response to that made in the Richards Report 1991 when 87% agreed or agreed strongly with the statement. Nevertheless, when these results are further analysed, the 1991 survey showed that more respondents had strongly agreed (72%), than the respondents in the 2000 survey (56%). The latter survey showed that very few local authorities had carried out research before 1996, so the respondents in the Richards report were unlikely to have based their answers on research. Thus, the 1991 result indicates the optimistic attitude towards tourism as a source of job creation at that time. The 2000 survey showed that of the respondents who stated that they strongly agreed with the statement, almost half (47%) had carried out some research on tourism's economic impact in their area. The discussion on tourism policy objectives in Section 3.3 had shown that the provision of employment through tourism was considered as an important policy objective by many local authorities. In 1991 according to the Richards Report, employment generation was ranked third as a priority of local authority tourism policy, while in the 2000 survey it was ranked eighth as a separate objective. However, in the 2000 survey many respondents had stated 'economic development'

or 'regeneration' implying that the economic implications of tourism encompasses more benefits than just job creation (see section 3.3.4).

Only 4% (8) disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement. It was noted that only 25% (2) of these respondents had actually carried out research on tourism and the provision of jobs. It was found that the negative reaction to tourism as a provider of jobs tended to be from those district councils and London Boroughs where there was little tourism development. In the Richards Report 1991 only 1% had slightly disagreed with the statement indicating again the higher level of optimism at that time.

4.1.2 Little tourism development in area

Most of the local authorities disagreed or strongly disagreed (62%) that there is little tourism development in their area, indicating the growing significance of tourism in most areas of England. These local authorities were more likely to be county councils and metropolitan boroughs. As the level of tourism development in a particular local authority area is likely to influence tourism policy, it was not surprising that the majority of those local authorities with tourism development had a written tourism policy (88%). Nevertheless, 12% (15) of local authorities who had indicated that there was tourism development in their area did not have a written tourism policy. Of these local authorities 7% (9) had indicated that they strongly disagreed with the above statement. This result was surprising in view of the emphasis placed on the mitigation of negative impacts of large numbers of tourists to an area in recent years. For example, the discussion on sustainability in Section 3.3.2 had shown that sustainability, for example visitor management, had been a significant policy objective among those who had tourism policies, as well as promotion and marketing of an area.

A number of local authorities (22%) agreed or agreed strongly with the statement, indicating that tourism development was not significant in their area. These respondents tended to be district councils, London boroughs or unitary councils. Two thirds of those authorities (66%) with little tourism development in their area had written tourism policies indicating their intention to increase the level of tourism activity and development.

4.1.3 Tourism development has led to overcrowding of roads

In recent years there has been increased concern for the impacts of transport in general. The role of the motor car, in particular, as a method of transport for holidays and day trips is significant, and the managing of visitor transport is generally incorporated in transport policy.

The majority of local authorities disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement (60%) which indicates that their local roads are not suffering from overcrowding due to tourism. This was an interesting finding as almost two thirds (59%) of these local authorities, had indicated that there was tourism development in their area. On one hand, this result may be due to the difficulty of ascertaining what type of transport is actually causing the overcrowding. On the other hand, this result may be due to

local authority transport policy and management having implemented measures to mitigate overcrowding of their roads such as improving the road network, car park provision, restricting or regulating car access or developing and promoting effective public transport. Only 7% of those local authorities which had stated that sustainability was a tourism policy priority, had specified the encouragement of public transport to minimise visitor congestion.

Of all the respondents, 11% agreed or agreed strongly that there is overcrowding of their roads due to tourism. Most of these local authorities, unsurprisingly, had indicated that there was tourism development in their area and were more likely to be district councils and county councils.

4.1.4 Tourism development has harmed the natural environment

Interestingly, the Richards Report 1991 showed a more negative attitude towards tourism development's effect on the environment, with 79% indicating that tourism can damage the environment. The 2000 survey showed a dramatic change in opinion with a more positive attitude towards the effect of tourism development on the natural environment, with only 2% of the respondents agreeing that tourism has harmed the natural environment. This result is not surprising in view of the increased efforts of conservation and sustainability during the last decade, and local authorities' strategies and action plans with regard to the growth of tourism.

Although 74% of respondents had indicated that tourism development had not harmed the natural environment, tourism officers were more likely to have disagreed (48%) with the statement rather than <u>strongly</u> disagree (22%), indicating the difficulties involved in eradicating all negative impacts of tourism. Moreover, the percentage of 74% showed that there is still some way to go to avoid tourism development having an adverse effect on the natural environment.

4.1.5 Area would benefit from an expansion in tourism facilities and services

The majority of local authorities (81%) felt that their areas would benefit from tourism expansion. These tended to be those areas where there was existing tourism development (61%) while only 21% of those areas with little tourism development had stated that they would benefit from an expansion in tourism facilities and services. District councils were particularly keen to benefit from an expansion in tourism, followed by unitary councils and county councils. Only 6% of respondents disagreed with the statement, indicating the importance of tourism development to the majority of local economies in England, and the desire of local authorities to maximise the potential of their resources.

4.1.6 Area would benefit from policy statement on its tourism objectives

A proportion of respondents agreed or strongly agreed (46%) that their area would benefit from an explicit policy statement on their tourism objectives. These were more likely to be those local authorities which had a written tourism policy (74%). A

significant percentage of local authorities (41%) neither agreed or disagreed with this statement indicating an element of doubt, 88% of these respondents had a tourism policy. A number of respondents (13%) disagreed with the statement with the majority of these (93%) having a written tourism policy. The above results indicate that the majority of respondants are sceptical about the connection between policy and outcomes i.e. a positive policy statement will not necessarily lead to any benefits.

4.1.7 'Tomorrow's Tourism' has had an influence on tourism policy formulation in area

There was a mixed response to the influence on tourism policy of the Department of Culture Media and Sport's (DCMS) strategy for tourism, *'Tomorrow's Tourism'*. This document, published in 1999, sets out action to address the weaknesses, for instance, the establishment of a new national body to focus on a national strategic framework and to provide leadership for the tourism industry (DCMS 1999 p.5 & 16). A significant number of local authorities (40%) felt that it had had an influence on local tourism policy formulation, and the majority (87%) of these respondents had a written tourism policy. Although a relatively small number of local authorities (20%) felt that it had had no influence, over three-quarters of these respondents had a written tourism policy. These results are not surprising as much of the policy identified in Figure 7 preceeded this publication of the national Government's publication

CHAPTER 5 TOURISM RESEARCH

5.1   The Importance of Research

It is recognised by tourism marketing experts (Seaton & Bennett 1996, Horner & Swarbrooke 1996) that in order to develop a strategic plan, it is necessary for an organisation to gather information on its internal and external environment. The former includes the organisation's performance – its weaknesses and strengths, resources, organisational structure, product and consumer market, while the latter includes such factors as the economic climate, competition, opportunities and threats. This is generally referred to as a marketing audit and involves the carrying out of a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis and/or PEST (Political, Economic, Social and Technological) analysis. An understanding of the organisation's position and its products in the marketplace is established prior to the setting of marketing objectives and future strategies.

This detailed research and situation analysis is particularly necessary as a basis for local authority tourism strategies and policies as destination managers need to be able to respond to changes in tourism patterns. For a destination an appraisal of the consumer market is required and an understanding of the segments which constitute it, for example, the monitoring of visitor numbers, types of visitors, expenditure, motivations, visit patterns and needs of visitors. The conducting of such research, particularly on a regular basis, can ensure a positive response to

changes in the marketplace, and that the expectations of visitors are met as well as those of all stakeholders at the destination. In addition, by carrying out research the social, environmental and economic impacts of tourism can be identified and assessed, for example, residents' reactions to tourism, transport patterns and parking requirements and the effect of tourism on local businesses. Thus, research can be an effective tool in formulating policy on the planning and developing of tourism in a particular destination and adopting an appropriate marketing activity.

5.2   Research Carried Out by Local Authorities

The survey showed that 80% of respondents had a written tourism policy and that marketing and promotional activity was the key objective of the majority of these strategies (see section 3.3.1). As mentioned in the previous section the carrying out of research is key to achieving this objective. Research is also required in the carrying out of other tourism policy objectives identified by the local authorities in their strategies or plans, for example, product development, economic development, improvement of quality, increasing visitor spend, providing employment etc. With this in mind the Research Team was interested in exploring the extent to which local authorities carry out research. Respondents were therefore asked to indicate whether they had carried out research in some key areas. These included the following:

- *Estimates of visitor numbers* (e.g. to establish whether there has been a drop in visitor numbers or a rapid, uncontrolled growth in tourism etc.)
- *Visitor types* (e.g. age ranges, socio-economic groups, interests etc.)
- *Visitor spend* (e.g. length of stay, areas of expenditure etc.)
- *Seasonality* (e.g. marked seasonal peaks in arrivals etc.)
- *Jobs supported* (e.g. numbers and types of jobs etc.)
- *Other* (e.g. image of destination, benchmarking, impacts of tourism etc.)

Over 60% (64.4%) had carried out some form of research on tourism, but many of the respondents had not covered all the sections listed above, nor was the research up-to-date (see following sections). There have been a number of publications during the last decade, which have emphasised the need for good quality and up-to-date information i.e. relevant and reliable statistics to ensure good strategies. These have included: *Getting It Right – A Guide to Visitor Management in Historic Towns* in 1994, the DCMS's *Tourism – Towards* Sustainability in 1998, *Making Connections – A Practical Guide to Tourism Management in Historic Towns* and *Tomorrow's Tourism* in 1999. The publication *Tourism – Towards Sustainability* sets out guidelines for measuring the local impact of tourism, while recently the DCMS has provided financial support for The Tourism and Leisure Research Network (TOLERN) to ensure the sharing of good practice. These publications and support have encouraged local authorities to carry out more research over the last decade.

The findings of the survey showed that 63 local authorities had stated that the carrying out of research was a tourism policy objective priority for them (see Section 3.3). Research as a policy objective was ranked 10th in the 2000 survey while it

received no ranking in the Richards Report 1991 indicating that the importance of research was being realised. Nevertheless, the result of this survey shows that the DCMS in *Tomorrow's Tourism* (p.40) may be over optimistic with regards to the extent to which data accumulation and information system development is being carried out.

Interestingly, while 73% of local authorities with a written tourism policy had carried out some type of tourism research (as shown in Figure12), 28% had not carried out any type of research. This infers that over one quarter of local authorities base the objectives of their local tourism strategy or policy on regional and national intelligence. Some local authorities (15) had carried out some form of research but did not have a written tourism policy.

Figure 12 Authorities with a written tourism policy based on research

Research	Authorities with a Written Tourism Policy	
	Yes **Percentage/Frequency**	**No** **Percentage/Frequency**
• **Have carried out research**	72%/125	38%/15
• **Have not carried out research**	28%/48	62%/25
Total	100%/173	100%/40

The extent of research varied between the different types of local authorities. The findings revealed that a significant percentage (80%) of the Metropolitan Councils undertook some type of research (Figure), followed by Unitaries, District Councils and County Councils. Interestingly, just under a half (47%) of London Boroughs carried out some research, despite the important role of tourism in London, and the city's status as the main gateway to England for international visitors. The varying results between the local authorities, however, are not entirely unexpected. Tourism is after all not a statutory function, thus it is a sector which has to compete with the responsibilities of the local authorities, for example, housing, health and safety, transport etc. There are a number of issues, therefore, which influence the extent of the resources to deal with tourism, these include funding priorities of the local authority and political leadership.

Figure 13 Type of Local Authority which undertakes research

Local Authority Type	% of Local Authority type which undertake research	As a fraction
London Borough	47%	8/17
County Council	63%	19/30
Metropolitan Council	80%	16/20
District Council	64%	76/119
Unitary	67%	22/33

5.2.1 Date of Research

The date of the research was requested as well as the size of the survey carried out (see section 5.2.3). There has been an increase in the amount of research being carried out at a local level between 1996-9, with more authorities reporting that they have carried out each type of research identified in Figure 14 each year. The figures for 2000 are incomplete and reflect the timing of the survey (April/May 2000

A third of all research had been carried out in 1999 (the year that the DCMS published their strategy for tourism 'Tomorrow's Tourism'), and approximately one fifth in 1998. The lower percentage in 2000 was not unexpected due to the timing of this survey which was prior to the tourist season when most tourism monitoring is undertaken.

As discussed in Section 5.1 research needs to be constantly repeated in order to establish trends in the marketplace, and cannot be considered as a 'one-off' exercise. Only a small number of local authorities (15%) stated that they carry out research either annually or continuously. These local authorities were more likely to concentrate on visitor numbers and seasonality, and their method of research, where stated, tended to be estimations based on regional trends established by tourist boards or by the number of visitations to Tourist Information Centres.

Figure 14 Date of all research carried out by local authorities

Date	Percentage of overall research carried out
Pre 1996	8%
1996	5%
1997	8%
1998	17%
1999	34%
2000	10%
Annually/Continuously	15%
Not specified	3%
Total	100%

5.2.2 Type of Research

Local Authorities had most commonly carried out research into visitor numbers (56% of respondents) visitor spending (50%) and visitor types (47%) had carried out research

Research into economic impacts of tourism such as jobs supported (41%) and seasonality (32%) variations were not as frequently cited as research topics. This was surprising due to the priority of economic development and regeneration objectives (ranked 4th) and the importance placed on tourism development as a form of job creation (ranked 8th as a policy objective in 2000). Very few authorities reported that they had undertaken research into the environmental or social impacts

of tourism which was surprising as sustainability was ranked as the second most important policy objective.

Some local authorities (33) carried out other types of research. These included destination benchmarking, hotel occupancy studies and specific market research such as visitor attitudes, perception of destination and effectiveness of advertising campaigns.

Figure 15 showing Date and Type of Research carried out by local authorities

	Type of research Frequency					
Date	Visitor nos	Visitor types	Visitor Spend	Seasonality	Jobs supported	Other
Pre 1996	10	11	10	7	9	0
1996	5	4	7	2	5	2
1997	10	10	11	6	9	1
1998	20	21	21	11	17	4
1999	37	33	36	23	29	14
2000	12	11	12	10	12	1
Annually /Continuously	22	11	9	12	7	9
Not specified	6	3	3	0	1	2
Total	123	104	109	71	89	33
Percentage of all respondents	56%	47%	50%	32%	41%	15%

5.2.3 Size of the Surveys carried out by the local authorities

An indication of the size of the survey was of particular importance. Although the majority stated that they had carried out research, it was apparent from the results that the sample size was small or, in some cases, they had based their research on the statistics obtained by regional, national trends established by tourist boards.

Respondents were asked to give the sample size of their surveys in order to ascertain the extent of research carried out. It was noted that many of the local authorities who had stated that they had carried out specific research, did not give the size of the survey, nevertheless, an overview could be ascertained from the answers that were given. The majority of surveys were between 501-1000, followed by 1001-2000 and 101-500. Unsurprisingly, due to the costs in time and staffing required only a few surveys were over 2000

Figure 16 Frequency of the size of the survey for each type of research by local authorities

Size of Survey	Type of research Frequency						
	Visitor nos	Visitor types	Visitor Spend	Seasonality	Jobs supported	Other	Total
1-100	2	1	1	3	2	4	13
101-500	5	12	7	4	5	7	40
501-1000	12	16	14	8	5	3	58
1001-2000	8	15	11	8	8	0	50
2001-3000	1	4	3	3	0	1	12
Over 3000	2	6	4	4	2	2	20
Unspecified	93	50	69	41	65	16	334
Total	123	104	109	71	89	33	-

5.2.4 Method of Research

Although information on the method of research had not been asked, some respondents supplied some additional information.

The method of acquiring statistical information on visitor numbers varied. It was apparent that different monitoring techniques were being used. Many local authorities mentioned that they used statistics based on the Cambridge Economic Impact Model, through their regional tourist board. This method measures the volume and of tourism locally while using national data sources; comparison with similar destinations can be made and broad trends identified. Other methods included the using of statistics acquired by their tourist board, the carrying out of their own in-house research or the using of Figures acquired from assessing visitation to Tourist Information Centres. Other local authorities outsourced research to independent agencies, such as STEAM (Scarborough Tourism Economic Activity Model) which carries out research on a weekly basis for several authorities. A few carried out the less systematic approach of estimations based on national or regional overall trends.

CHAPTER 6 TOURISM BUDGET

6.1   Gross Budget

In order to analyse Local Authority tourism budgets one question was posed requesting that respondents state the gross budget of the tourism department/section/team for 3 years (1998-1999, 1999-2000 and 2000-2001). The responses indicate that mean budget slightly declined over the period from £288,466 in 1998-99 to £258,414 in 2000-2001 with the lowest mean budget

£251,784 allocated in the period immediately prior to the survey in 1999-2000. Whilst mean budgets remained fairly constant there was a decrease in the number of authorities who reported that they had no tourism budget (14 % in 1998-1999 to 6% in 2000-2001). Those authorities which received significant[1] budgets increased from 50% in 1998-9 to 57% in 1999-2000 and declined slightly in 2000-2001 to 56%.

Figure 17 Tourism Budgets

Insert here

The numbers of authorities allocating very small[2] budgets (£1-10,000) for tourism activities increased rapidly from 8% in 1998-9 to 21% in 2000-2001.

The results indicate that 27% of responding authorities do not employ full time dedicated tourism staff. Further investigation of the results in section 3 showing the percentage of authorities with tourism policies indicate that in 2000-2001, 15 % of responding authorities were making and implementing tourism policy with budgets of less that £10,000.

Response rates for 1998-99 were low with 20% of authorities failing to provide a response. Tourism officers reported difficulties in obtaining historical data to enable the identification of budgets for this period and difficulties in isolating tourism budgets from other departmental expenditure. Response rates for 1999-2000 and 2000-1 were better but tourism officers reported difficulties in isolating tourism expenditure from other expenditure (i.e. economic development expenditure) and complexities arising from multi-agency funding arising from partnerships and contracting out tourism services.

Respondents were asked to identify the percentage of their budgets devoted to staff expenditure, marketing and promotions, research and other activities. A number of different approaches were adopted to answering this question which has meant that this information has not been presented and evaluated in detail in this report.

---

[1] Significant budgets are defined as those budgets over £50,000 which implies at least 1 full time member of staff is employed to carry out tourism activities within the local authority with a budget for marketing and promotional or research activities.
[2] Small budgets are defined as those budgets under £10,000. This implies that the local authority does not directly employ one full time member of staff to carry out tourism activities. Officers in these authorities reported either joint funding of a "tourism officer" or a limited budget for tourism marketing or research activities which would be carried out by staff with other responsibilities i.e. economic development.

6.2   Additional Budget

The survey revealed that there has been a slight decrease in mean tourism budgets over the last three years in tourism budgets and local authorities reported financial pressures from other service areas and a scarcity of resources to carry out their objectives.   This section examines where local authorities' priorities would lie if further funds were available to them.   Therefore, two hypothetical questions were asked in order to ascertain the priorities of local authorities if their budgets were to be expanded by £50,000 and £200,000.

6.2.1 An extra £50,000?

The majority of respondents indicated that they would use an extra £50,000 on one specific activity.   The ten most frequent answers are set out in Figure 18 Promotional activity (25%) was considered the top priority by many of those who responded to the question.   This was followed by tourism development, staffing, research, project work, visitor information provision and TIC provision.   Some local authorities had more than one priority, for instance, promotion with Information Technology, and promotion with research.

Figure 18 Top 10 Priorities shown by local authorities if budget was expanded by £50,000

Priorities	Percentage of Local Authorities
• **Promotional Activity**	25%
• **Tourism Development**	12%
• **Staffing**	11%
• **Promotional Activity/Information Technology**	10%
• **Research**	7%
• **Project Work**	5%
• **Visitor Information Provision**	5%
• **Promotional Activity/Research**	5%
• **Promotional Activity/Staffing**	4%
• **TIC Provision**	3%
• **Other**	13%
Total	100%

6.2.2 An Extra £200,000?

The survey revealed there was a range of priorities for local authorities if their budget was expanded by an additional £200,000, as shown in Figure 19 Some respondents (14%) set out a combination of staffing, research, promotional activity and information services.   Others mentioned only one priority such as tourism development (13%) and promotional activity (12%).   Some respondents mentioned

promotion with tourism development, promotion with Information Technology, TIC provision and project work.

Figure 19 Top 10 Priorities shown by local authorities if budget was expanded by £200,000

Priorities	Percentage of local authorities
Staffing/Research/Marketing/Information Services	14%
Tourism Development	13%
Promotional Activity	12%
Promotional Activity/Tourism Development	10%
Project Work	9%
TIC Provision	9%
Promotional Activity/Information Technology	9%
Promotional Activity/Research	5%
Staffing	4%
Other	15%

CHAPTER 7 GOOD PRACTICE AND IMPLEMENTATION

7.1 Good Practice

Respondents were asked whether they could give an example of good practice in their area, and if so, were asked to specify. Most local authorities (84%) were able to give at least one example, most of these respondents (89%) had a written tourism policy. Although the question only called for one example, 59 local authorities were able to give two examples, while a further 23 set out three examples.

Figure 20 shows the percentage of each type of good practice given as the first example. By far the most mentioned good practice was initiatives and projects relating to partnerships with the private and voluntary sectors, followed by research/monitoring and sustainability initiatives. Some frequently given types of examples are given in Figure 21.

Those local authorities who gave a second example tended to mention research/monitoring, policies on business tourism and sustainability initiatives, while those local authorities who specified a third example indicated sustainability initiatives, cultural tourism strategies and destination management systems.

Figure 20 Examples of Good Practice

Example	Percentage of local authorities giving example
Partnerships with private and voluntary sectors	81%
Research and Monitoring	6%
Sustainability Initiatives	5%
Destination Management systems	3%

Policies on Business Tourism	1%
Cultural Tourism Strategies	1%
Other	3%

As partnerships were by far the most cited as an example of good practice by the local authorities, further analysis was carried out to ascertain the type of partnerships. Local authority partnerships varied considerably, the most popular being the partnership between public and private business leaders, for example, the local authority with tourism businesses, this was followed by partnerships between local authorities themselves. Partnerships between voluntary, private and public organisations were also cited. A few local authorities gave the number of members involved and these ranged from 30 to 1000. The title of the partnership also varied, for example, Tourism Forum, Working Group, Consortium, Initiative, Association, Tourism Group as well as just simply Partnership. A small number of local authorities (9) mentioned that they had received EU funding such as Konver and Interrug to establish the partnership.

Figure 21 Some frequently given examples of each type of Good Practice

Partnership Initiatives	Promotional campaigns Marketing and research Develop tourism product and service quality. Event organisation Support, advice and communication
Research & Monitoring	Destination or attraction benchmarking Research partnerships Visitor surveys & market segment analysis
Sustainability Initiatives	Development of cycle trails or paths Bus links to attractions Educating the tourist e.g. beach users

7.2   Communication Links

An indication of the strength of the communication links between the local authorities and the private sector, regional tourist board, regional development agency and local residents was sought. This is important to establish whether local authorities were operating in isolation or whether offered or received support from other organisations or individuals connected to, or affected by, tourism. Respondents were asked to describe these communication links in terms of very weak, weak, neither/nor, fairly strong or very strong. The results are set out in Figure and discussed in the following sections.

Figure 22 Local Authorities' Communication Links

	Very weak	Weak	Neither/ nor	Fairly strong	Very strong
Private sector	4%	7%	15%	47%	27%
Regional Tourist Board	6%	8%	18%	44%	24%

Regional Development Agency	19%	32%	28%	16%	5%
Local Residents	7%	22%	36%	28%	7%

7.2.1 Communication Links with Private Sector

The survey revealed that there are strong (74%) communication links between local authorities and the private sector. This was not surprising in view of the increasing tendency for the creation of private and public partnerships during the last decade. Sections 3.3.6 and 7.1 had shown that local authorities were either endeavouring to sustain or create partnerships with the private sector, with the majority citing partnerships as examples of good practice.

Figure 23 Communication links with private sector by type of authority

Type of authority	Very weak	Weak	Neither/ or	Fairly strong	Very strong
London Borough	0%	6%	19%	44%	31%
County Council	14%	7%	11%	50%	18%
Metropolitan Council	10%	5%	5%	55%	25%
District Council	1%	9%	20%	50%	20%
Unitary	3%	3%	6%	31%	57%

Figure 21 shows that unitary, metropolitan councils and London Boroughs were more likely to have stronger links with the private sector than county councils or district councils. Only 13% of those respondents who responded to the question felt that their links were weak with the private sector.

7.2.2 Communication Links with Regional Tourist Board

The survey showed that there were strong communication links with the regional tourist board (68%), particularly county councils. This result was unsurprising given the often collaboration required in developing and promoting an area as a destination. Nevertheless, some local authorities (14%) felt that their links were weak, these tended to be district councils, London boroughs and the unitaries. This result reflects the tendency for some local authorities to take on previous tasks undertaken by the Regional Tourist Boards i.e. tourism promotion.

Figure 24 Communication links with Regional Tourist Board by type of authority

Type of authority	Very weak	Weak	Neither/ or	Fairly strong	Very strong

London Borough	0%	12%	18%	47%	23%
County Council	0%	0%	14%	54%	32%
Metropolitan Council	0%	5%	20%	55%	20%
District Council	10%	10%	21%	40%	19%
Unitary	3%	9%	9%	41%	38%

7.2.3 Communication Links with Regional Development Agency

The majority of respondents, in particular district councils, felt that their communication links between themselves and their Regional Development Agency was weak (51%). This result is due to the recent introduction of the Regional Development Agencies in 1991. Nevertheless, 21% felt that their links were strong; this was particularly in the case of county councils who were more likely to interact at a regional level. A high percentage of respondents (28%) were unable to indicate either way.

Figure 25 Communication links with Regional Development Agency by type of authority

Type of authority	Very weak	Weak	Neither/ or	Fairly strong	Very strong
London Borough	20%	7%	53%	13%	7%
County Council	11%	25%	10%	43%	11%
Metropolitan Council	21%	26%	37%	11%	5%
District Council	23%	39%	27%	10%	1%
Unitary	16%	28%	28%	16%	12%

7.2.4 Communication Links with Local Residents

The survey showed that only a third of the local authorities (35%) had strong communication links with local residents. They tended to be those local authorities who were directly involved in tourism at a more local level, most notably the London Boroughs followed by the unitaries. A high percentage of respondents were unable to indicate either way (36%), while 29% indicated that they had weak links with local residents. The latter was particularly noticeable amongst county councils and metropolitan councils due to the larger areas these local authorities covered.

Figure 26 Communication links with Local Residents by type of authority

Type of authority	Very weak	Weak	Neither/ or	Fairly strong	Very strong
London Borough	6%	13%	31%	37%	13%
County Council	25%	43%	28%	4%	0%
Metropolitan Council	5%	32%	32%	26%	5%
District Council	3%	18%	40%	34%	5%
Unitary	6%	16%	34%	28%	16%

Chapter 8 Conclusions

Local authorities are involved in a broad range of tourism activities such as promotion/information, planning, visitor and attraction management and the development of new attractions (direct activities). They are also involved infrastructure and service provision that impacts upon visitors and their overall experience (indirect activities).

The organisation of tourism policy making and implementation within local authorities.

The survey shows that in England tourism as an activity or service area does not fit easily into traditional local authority department structures and its place in emerging service delivery structures varies between different authorities. Tourism decisions and activities occur in diverse areas of the local authority organisation and decision making structures.

Local authority tourism activities are usually delivered under the umbrella of broader service function and are increasingly located in service areas which span traditional boundaries (strategic and executive management areas) or multi functional service areas. The emerging importance of cross functional or multifunctional service groupings indicate that local authorities are increasingly creating structures to integrate policy making across traditional functional boundaries in accordance with Central Governments modernising agenda.

There appears to be an emerging consensus that tourism activities have a much wider economic, environmental and social role than was perceived in earlier surveys. Organisational changes reflect an increased awareness of the nature and potential benefits of tourism activities across a whole range of service areas.

The survey showed that a growing number of tourism services are carried out by agencies or through partnership arrangements with other governmental and non governmental organisations.

The extent and type of local authority tourism policy and local authority involvement in tourism
.
The majority of local authorities surveyed had a written tourism policy or were in the process of adopting a tourism policy. Tourism policy was most frequently expressed within a tourism strategy. In cases where tourism policy was expressed within a broader policy document it was most frequently expressed within economic development policy or land use planning policy. This reflects the emerging organisational position of tourism services linked to or within economic development and regeneration services and the requirements for tourism to be considered in Structure and Unitary Development Plans.

Tourism policy objectives of Local Authorities.

The orientation of tourism policy appears to have changed to reflect broader economic, environmental and social issues and reflects organisational changes.

The 5 most frequently cited tourism policy objectives related to the marketing and promotion of the area, sustainability, product development, economic development/regeneration and improving the quality of attractions/product. Two of these objectives (sustainability and economic development/regeneration) have emerged over the past decade and were not cited in previous research. Both indicate that tourism activities and services are increasingly considered in a much broader policy context and take account of economic, environmental and social considerations.

Local authority tourism policies are increasingly developed in the context of sustainable tourism considering the relationship between tourism and the wider environment and focussing on balancing the needs of the visitor, the local economy, the environment and the host community. Tourism services are increasingly provided within service areas that have a community function and tourism objectives relate to the needs of residents as well as visitors.

Marketing and promotion has emerged as the highest priority tourism objective and has grown in importance as an element of local authority policy. The continuing modernisation of local authority procedures and structures and the growth in importance of partnership with other sectors involved in tourism service provision has led authorities to develop their marketing and promotional functions to develop and strengthen positive images their areas.

The level of tourism monitoring research currently being carried out by local authorities

Tourism research emerged as a policy objective for a number of local authorities (ranked 10th most important objective) and an increasing number of authorities are carrying out research to monitor tourism and its impacts. It is interesting to note that 28% of authorities with a written tourism policy had not carried out any tourism research at a local level which infers that they have based the objectives of their local tourism strategy or policy on regional and national intelligence*.*

Tourism research activities centre around marketing research activities (visitor numbers, visitor spending and visitor types) and are less likely to consider the economic, environmental or social impacts of tourism. This was surprising on the basis of the priority of policy objectives in respect of sustainability (ranked 2nd as a policy objective) economic development and regeneration objectives (ranked 4th) and the importance placed on tourism development as a form of job creation (ranked 8th as a policy objective in 2000). The low levels of research in these areas were not consistent with the research results in sections 2 and 3 which indicate that tourism activities and policies are increasingly framed with an understanding about the wider impacts tourism activities.

The allocation of tourism budgets and trends.

Tourism budgets have declined slightly between 1998-9 and 2000-1 and local authorities reported financial pressures from other service area and scarcity of resources to carry out their functions. There was a decrease in the number of authorities with no tourism budget between 1998-9 and 2000-1 but an increase in

the number of authorities who allocated very small budgets (under £10,000) to their tourism activities. On the basis of small size of budgets in many authorities it is unsurprising that research levels are relatively low and in particular that research into the broader impacts of tourism has not been undertaken by many authorities.

The results indicate that over quarter of responding authorities do not employ full time dedicated tourism staff.

Good practice and implementation of tourism policies by local authorities.

Tourism services are increasingly being offered in partnership with other organisations and communication links between different actors is perceived as increasingly important.

The survey has indicated that there is an increasing recognition of the role of tourism in respect of broader local objectives and service functions. Tourism is not perceived as a separate service area but is part of economic, environment and social/community policy. However the move into the "main" policy arena does not appear to have impacted on budgets and tourism services are often funded as marginal areas with budgets declining slightly over the past three years. A significant number of authorities are formulating and implementing tourism polices with very limited budgets and with no full time dedicated tourism staff.

Bibliography

Baum, T. (1994), "The development and implementation of national tourism policies" in *Tourism Management*, Vol. 15(3) pp.185-192

Davidson, R. & Maitland, R. (1997) *Tourism Destinations*, Hodder & Stoughton, London

Department for Culture, Media and Sport (1998) *Tourism – Towards Sustainability*

Department for Culture, Media and Sport (1999) *Tomorrow's Tourism*

Elliott, J. (1997), *Tourism Politics and Public Sector Management*, Routledge, London

English Tourist Board and English Historic Towns Forum (1994) *Getting It Right – A Guide to Visitor Management in Historic Towns*

Horner, S. & Swarbrooke, J. (1996) *Marketing Tourism Hospitality and Leisure in Europe*, International Thomson Business Press, London

Richards, G. (1991) *The UK Local Authority Tourism Survey 1991*, Centre for Leisure & Tourism Studies, London & British Association of Tourism Officers, Plymouth

Seaton, A.V. & Bennett, M.M. (1996) *Marketing Tourism Products, Concepts, Issues, Cases*, International Thomson Business Press, London

Shaw, G., Greenwood, J. & Williams, A.M. (1991) "The United Kingdom: market responses and public policy" in A.M. Williams & G. Shaw (Eds), **Tourism and Economic Development: Western European Experiences**, Belhaven Press, London

Williams, A.M. & Montanari, A. (1995) **European Tourism Regions, Spaces and Restructuring**, John Wiley & Sons, Chichester