



2004-2005
Promoting Sustainable Tourism

Background and case study

Background

With a population of 88,000 the South Hams is a rural and coastal district in South Devon comprising 6 market towns (Totnes, Dartmouth, Kingsbridge, Salcombe, Modbury and Ivybridge). Two thirds of its 887 sq. km is protected landscape – National Park or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) with Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), many on the spectacular coastline. Tourism is a major part of the economy with £250 million total expenditure supporting 8,567 jobs, 23% of overall employment.

What has been achieved?

The Council harnesses these assets to promote tourism and visitor management techniques which deliver benefits for residents and visitors.



Our Tourism Strategy enhances industry profitability, the environment and benefits the community and visitors. Including:

- *best practice consultation and review through effective partnerships;*
- *careful management and effective use of budgets;*

- *effective use of external funding;*
- *commitment from councillors and staff;*
- *robust processes and performance management;*
- *strong effective relationships with independent Tourist Information Centres (TIC)*
- *enthusiastic Tourism Forum members*

These deliver a quality-focused sustainable tourism product through key tools:

- *strategy based on sound visitor and business research and consultation*
- *South Hams Sustainable Tourism Initiative*
- *flagship Green Tourism Business Accreditation Scheme*
- *On the Right Tracks" Visitor Payback Scheme*
- *Green Business Club*
- *sustainable tourism marketing niche*
- *Cross-cutting policies within the council supporting sustainable tourism themes*
- *Innovative approaches to environmental enhancement.*



Top tips

- *Have a clear vision and strategy – ours is “To become the UK’s acknowledged Green Tourism destination by 2005”.*
- *Involve the local tourism industry to develop projects.*
- *Develop effective partnerships with other local authorities and agencies.*
- *Know your markets through visitor and business surveys and research.*
- *Protect the local landscape and enable access to visitors and local people.*

Tips on how you can do it:

You don't have to be “BIG” to make a difference – small councils can achieve results through effective partnerships.

- *Develop a breadth of strategy delivered through shared vision and priorities.*
- *Deliver real benefits by providing visitor satisfaction, industry profitability, community acceptance and benefit, together with environmental protection and enhancement.*
- *Involve the industry and visitor through consultation surveys to ensure strategic approaches can be established and delivered locally.*
- *Destination management and product development requires careful prioritisation of limited resources. Cross disciplinary and effective partnership working is required between public, private and voluntary sectors.*
- *Community Strategies/AONB Management Plans can develop strong ownership and enabling roles within local communities and assist authorities to engage stakeholders and aid sustainable tourism.*

