



2004-2005
Promoting Sustainable Tourism

A strategic approach

Our sustainable tourism strategy, developed with extensive consumer, business and community consultation, has been a proven success for over ten years, enhancing industry profitability and the environment and benefiting the community and its visitors.

'The overarching vision of South Hams District Council is 'To improve the well-being of the people of the South Hams'

Following a comprehensive review in 2001/02 we established new priorities for 2002-2008. These are to –

- *Secure a supply of housing for local people at affordable levels*
- *Create the conditions for growth and maintenance of quality economic activity*
- *Maintain the District's distinctive environment whilst enabling access and sensitive development*

- *Maintain a clean environment*
- *Work with others to improve access to key services*
- *Improve core service performance in a cost effective way*

Each of the priorities is defined by a series of SMART targets and underpinned by the following six commitments: equality of opportunity; sustainability; community involvement and community vibrancy; effective partnership; value for money; communication, consultation and openness.

In providing these functions, the council works with the tourism industry to capitalise upon the local distinctiveness of the area and to promote a sustainable product. It balances the needs of the visitors, residents and their shared interest in maintaining the local environment. Tourism is recognised corporately as a cross cutting issue, with benefits for residents and visitors that together boost the image of the locality and local pride.



The council has developed, with Key partners and stakeholders, a portfolio of strategies based on sound data and research that contribute to a long term vision for sustainable tourism. The strategies in place include:

- *Tourism and Marketing Strategy 2000 – 2005*
- *AONB Management Plan*
- *Countryside Recreation and Access Strategy*
- *South Hams Community Strategy and South Hams Agenda 21 Plan*
- *Prosperity Strategy*
- *Local Plan*
- *Devon Local Transport Plan*
- *Waste and Environment Management*



To deliver its sustainable tourism objectives, the council works through local partners, particularly the South Hams Tourism Forum and the Sustainable Tourism Initiative Steering Group. As the South Hams is a remote rural area, with over 1200 SMEs in the tourism sector, we have to maximise our limited resources by enabling our partners and providing leadership and community support.

The Council recognises that tourism relates to a vast array of policy and strategy across the council. It provides a key for the economic regeneration of the area. Sustainable tourism is seen as a management and marketing process adopted throughout the authority, contributing towards market growth and maximising the benefits to the local communities, not merely to promote green issues.



These strategies are informed by our systematic approach to business/service management. This includes information gathering through our partnerships, survey and data collection, member and officer networking, attendance at national and regional training events and benchmarking. Our strategic priorities are reviewed every five years and our service plans and action programmes are reviewed annually.

