

SUSTAINABLE TOURISM A DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR EASTBOURNE.

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Eastbourne is found on the south coast of the UK, and is about 110 k from London. It is an expanding town, as it is within commuter distance of London. It is a popular holiday destination, and also hosts conferences.

TOURISM AND EASTBOURNE

- Main industry for the town
- Brings in over 162 Euros each year
- 4000 jobs rely on tourism
- 90% of these jobs are permanent

So you can see, it is rather important!

But the town cannot rest on it's good name, it must consider:

- Competition from other holiday resorts
- The town must develop
- This must be sustainable
- It must be realistic

EASTBOURNE TODAY

- Local population is about 90,000 (but growing)
- Approximately 400,000 visitors stay in Eastbourne each year
- Many more come as day visitors, especially for special events
- Many hotels owned by coach companies
- Coaches encouraged as more environmentally friendly than cars

PRESENT TARGET MARKET

At present, the major target market for Eastbourne is in the over 55 age group. These tend to be the people who have retired from work, and can take the time to go on holidays. Eastbourne is a popular second holiday destination.

Eastbourne does also attract a significant number of visitors from the 15 – 24 age group, as many language schools operate during the summer months. This is where young people from abroad visit Eastbourne to improve their English.

Due to the town being used for conferences, the socio- economic profile of the visitors shows a bias in the professional and managerial employment.

Most visitors to Eastbourne originate from the UK especially from the south of the country. However, there are an ever increasing number of overseas tourists visiting the town.

WHY DO PEOPLE VISIT EASTBOURNE?

- Holidays
- Conferences
- Day trips to events
- Language schools

WHAT DO THEY GET WHEN THEY GET ARRIVE?

- Good quality accommodation
- Clean beaches
- Good weather
- Variety of outdoor and indoor activities
- Theatres

EASTBOURNE'S CURRENT TOURISM STRATEGY

- Maximise tourism's contribution to the Eastbourne economy.
- Offer a high quality, diversified and value for money product throughout the year.
- Attract a premium price for this premium product.
- Position itself as an up-market, dynamic destination with international appeal.

This is all very well, but the visitors of tomorrow want more, Eastbourne needs to diversify.

SO HOW DOES EASTBOURNE PLAN TO DEVELOP?

Interview with Keith Morrison, Head of Tourism Development for Eastbourne.

Keith, can you tell us what your job is?

- Boost the local economy
- Give the visitors a good time, and get their money!

What different events are there going to be in the future?

- Develop Eastbourne as a tourist resort
- Visitors now want more than just lying on a beach
- International women's tennis, just before Wimbledon
- 4 day air show, biggest in the UK
- Introduction of a Beer Festival
- Try and get something for each weekend in the year
- Using modern technology, target specific audiences for specific events

What buildings are going to be built in the future?

- Nothing new, but develop what is here, such as the shelters along the seafront

What attractions are there going to be in the future?

- New attractions are expensive, and often run at a loss
- Develop partnerships with industry
- Already have some on trial, e.g. children's rides on the seafront, with the aim of getting young families to the resort

If all of these are going ahead, where is all the finance coming from?

- Partnership with industry
- Propose business plans and get money from central government
- Get PLC's to buy private waste land, and invest the money in the tourist economy

You recently published a "Seafront strategy" document. This was available for public consultation. What reactions did you get?

- Public consultation is very important
- Seafront strategy especially exciting
- Eastbourne is in the top 10 of UK holiday resorts, and needs to stay there
- Feedback generally very positive, but cannot get everything right at the first attempt, so some things have changed
- There is a bigger question, as Eastbourne is known as an "Old persons resort"
- Visitors are getting younger, so must change what is on offer
- Visitors want good food, clean beaches (European blue flag)
- Need to access a younger audience

Are there any different plans for marketing Eastbourne?

- Old way was to produce a glossy guide
- Very nice, but environmentally unfriendly
- More use of the world wide web
- Direct mail to advertise specific offers
- Most of the glossy magazines went in the bin, so not only bad for the environment, but a waste of money!

Given the proposed developments, how will these directly and indirectly affect the local residents?

- Tourism works well in Eastbourne as everything is available to local residents as well as visitors
- Local residents consulted about what they want
- Increasingly young town, so looking to provide more

EASTBOURNE'S TOURISM STRATEGY FOR THE FUTURE

Many of the aspects of the current tourism strategy will be retained, but:

- Maximise tourism's contribution to the social life of the resort.
- Target primary markets of "Empty nesters", conference visitors and students of English as a foreign language.
- Co-ordinate the marketing message to convey a younger, more dynamic image of the resort.
- Encourage more short breaks to capitalise on this expanding market sector.
- Increase market share at the expense of the competition and build customer loyalty.
- Reduce seasonality through boosting conference business.
- Invest heavily in tourism people and create a centre for learning excellence.

- Stimulate investment in tourism infrastructure and facilities.
- Create task-focussed partnership to deliver the strategy.

CHANGING DEMOGRAPHICS

In the future Eastbourne will have two target audiences:

1. The current audience.
2. 34 – 40 year olds with specific “quality” images to pursue now.

Eastbourne’s current and future markets are far more quality orientated.

- They are used to travel.
- They are the last generation retiring early and with suitable pension provision.
- They will pay for what they like.
- They will vote with their feet.
- They aspire to a “lifestyle”, sports, leisure activities, food and culture, after “something different”.

WHAT IS THE FUTURE FOR TOURISM IN EASTBOURNE?

- A change in marketing is needed. Greater use of IT
- Eastbourne must introduce new products to a new demographic age group.
- 5 – 15 year strategy to capture the 45+ age group.

EASTBOURNE SWOT ANALYSIS

STRENGTHS

- Location
- Weather
- Compact and flat
- Range of attractions
- Beach/seafront
- Access to London
- Marina
- Pier
- Clean/well maintained
- Good variety of housing
- Good parking
- Events

WEAKNESSES

- Travel/road/rail
- Old image
- Fragile economy: dependency on tourism
- Poor retail facilities
- Lack of quality accommodation
- Poor perception
- Lack of quality attractions for teenagers
- Increase in crime
- Lack of quality restaurants

OPPORTUNITIES

- National Park/South Downs
- Marina
- Increased spend of ageing population
- Special breaks
- Links e.g. Brighton
- Links to Europe: ferry/tunnel
- Fish market
- Overseas students/family visits
- Radio/road shows
- Park and ride

THREATS

- Other holiday resorts
- Other attractions
- Bleak in winter
- Lack of funding
- Politics (local)
- Current image
- Urbanisation problems
- Cheap trips abroad

EASTBOURNE'S SEAFRONT

This is considered as very important, as it is the jewel in Eastbourne's crown. It has its own development plan. This is a 10 year working plan. Some parts have already been implemented, and it reflects the new ideas for the new market.

PURPOSE OF THE SEAFRONT STRATEGY

- Agree the most appropriate use of seafront land
- Improve the visual amenity of the seafront
- Enhance the environment
- Balance the needs for commercial facilities with the natural features and public areas
- Create a vibrant and prosperous seafront community meeting the agreed customer needs
- Encourage private sector investment and activity
- Ensure maximum use of external funding opportunities
- Extend the tourist season
- Create new opportunities for income and employment generation.
- Improve accessibility for users, including people with disabilities
- Identify and enhance the linkages between the seafront and the town centre
- Improve the safety provision for users of the beach and sea
- Advise on the management and maintenance of the seafront

THE VISION

- To make Eastbourne a safe place to live, work and visit
- To protect and improve health and reduce health inequalities within Eastbourne

- To develop a strong and sustainable local economy, encouraging business and investment into Eastbourne
- To enhance the opportunities for enjoyment within Eastbourne through active pursuits and simple relaxation
- To encourage a fair and socially inclusive society
- To protect and enhance the environment, sympathetically developing it for future generations

NEW IDEAS

- Beach fun areas to provide a significant and unusual attraction for residents and visitors
- Offshore *Son et Lumiere* (dancing water) attraction, would be unique to the UK and a headline event
- Development of the shelters along the seafront into retail and catering outlets
- Introduction of new events, so as to have a regular calendar. Beer festival on line for October 2003. (It was very successful)
- Introduction of cycle/skate only zones

TRANSPORT IMPROVEMENT STRATEGY

At present the following are problems:

- Deficiencies in the bus and train services
- Problems of congestion caused by growing car traffic
- Poor transport links which contribute to the area's difficulties in attracting businesses
- Inadequate facilities for cyclists and disabled persons

FOUR-PRONGED LONG TERM STRATEGY

1. To manage demand and restrain unnecessary car trips
2. To improve alternatives to the car
3. To change travel behaviour
4. To enhance the environment

AIMS OF THE STRATEGY

- To establish quality bus corridors to improve public transport
- Change travel behaviour through green travel plans, sustainable transport strategies, and health promotion strategy
- Town centre parking strategy, traffic management and traffic calming measures
- To reduce car borne visitor traffic
- To add value to the existing tourism product
- To enhance transport choices
- To reduce the environmental impact of traffic

TO CONCLUDE

- Eastbourne is a popular resort
- But it needs to progress into the 21st Century
- This development must be sustainable
- It must benefit the local residents and visitors alike
- If everyone works together then it will be a success

If any school would like to set up an exchange with us, we would be very happy for that to happen. It could be a visiting exchange, or an exchange of ideas done via the internet.

If you are interested, please contact our teacher at the school, details are as follows:

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We hope you have found this presentation interesting and useful.

**Thanks,
Dean and Daniel**