

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### • PURPOSE OF STRATEGY

This strategy provides a framework for strengthening tourism activity in Kirklees from 2004-2008. This strategy applies to the local authority area of Kirklees, yet its geographical remit is wider. Many agencies are involved in the delivery of tourism, and appropriate links with other council services and external organisations have been highlighted to encourage effective co-ordination and partnership of future activities.

The central vision of this strategy is to increase the volume and value of tourism to Kirklees over the next four years. In terms of value the overall target across all sectors is 5%. This equates to an extra £14 million of expenditure. In terms of actual volume a 5% increase in staying visitors equates to an extra 32,000 trips, or 100,000 bed nights. In terms of day visits the target an increase of 5% equates to an extra 320,000 trips. In terms of employment, a tourism job is created for approximately every £40k of expenditure so this would estimate a further 350 jobs within the sector.

### • CONTEXT

Tourism is Britain's third largest industry, worth £75.9 billion in 2002 and supports an estimated 1.79 million jobs in the UK, some 6.1% of all those employed within Great Britain. The value of tourism to the UK economy is increasing; tourism accounts for 4.4% of GDP and supports more jobs than the transport or construction sectors.

The Department of Culture, Media and Sport are responsible for the development of our tourism industry nationally, supported by the newly formed marketing organisation - Visit Britain. At a regional level two main organisations are involved in tourism delivery, the Regional Development Agency and Regional Tourist Board.

Being one of the most recognisable tourist brands within the UK, Yorkshire benefits from £4.4 billion of visitor spend each year. Kirklees is a member of the Yorkshire Tourist Board and is also involved in a number of sub-regional partnerships, including the Pennine Yorkshire Marketing Consortium, which produces promotional brochures and has developed the award winning [www.pennineyorkshire.co.uk](http://www.pennineyorkshire.co.uk) website.

### • CURRENT POSITION

Tourism is worth £285.6 million to the Kirklees economy (approx 7% of GDP) and supports 7023 FT jobs in the district (c.6% of the district workforce). In 2002, there were 6.4 million day visits, generating £199 million of expenditure, and 1.9 million overnight stays which generated a further £86.3 million.

Kirklees is a central location for touring and exploring Yorkshire with excellent communication links by road, rail and air. Offering superb scenery and landscapes, as well as a rich industrial and architectural heritage, Kirklees is a region of diversity and striking contrasts. The district boasts a variety of literary, TV and film connections, from the Brontës to 'Last of the Summer Wine', while music, theatre and events create colour, contrast and atmosphere. Quality retail attractions are emerging, including markets, shopping plazas, mill shops and arts and crafts industries.

Tourist visits to Kirklees are skewed towards the countryside areas around the Pennine fringe areas of the Holme and Colne Valleys, and around the town of Huddersfield. A fourth area for development potential lies with the Brontë connections within north Kirklees. These areas should be the priority geographical areas for future development.

Local residents as well as visitors from outside the area benefit from the visitor facilities on offer in the district – from visits to local attractions, walking and cycling routes in the countryside and the culture, arts and events that are held throughout the district.

#### • **CONSULTATION**

Local tourism businesses and organisations, councillors and local authority officers have been consulted in the development of this strategy, with over 80 people attending workshop sessions in total. Having contributed to a SWOT analysis of the district, six development themes were identified for future action.

#### • **PRIORITIES AND ACTIONS IDENTIFIED**

The strategy identifies three main geographical areas for development (Pennine Fringe, Huddersfield and Brontë connections) and identifies six priority areas for action and makes recommendations in each of these areas.

- market segmentation
- information provision
- enhancing quality
- partnerships and communication
- product development
- and market intelligence

In addition, the strategy recognises the importance of concentrating on six main product areas, being:

- countryside
- canals
- heritage and history
- culture and the arts
- retail
- events

There are recurring references within the recommendations to issues such as collaboration between council services, marketing, web development, improved networking with local businesses and enhanced partnership working.