

Hope Valley Forum – 21st November 2006
The Visitor's Experience

Open Questions

1. Concern from Hope PC relates to the traffic volume and cost of car parking – this means that visitors park on roadside. What is the future?

Derbyshire CC is aware of the clash between visitors' and residents' parking. They are working with the National Park Authority and police to try and solve the problem. However, they can't provide free parking.

High Peak BC – the car park charge should be under constant review. There are a lot of costs associated with managing visitors, and this is offset with car parking charges. But, if people are not using the car parks, this needs looking at. Hope does have some local (limited time) spaces outside shops.

Also the Gold Card scheme allows free travel – does it reduce car journeys?
Too early to say, but buses are now 80 % full, according to bus companies.

2. As a local retailer, we have noticed poor footfall and trade in Castleton this year. There is a concern that the PDNP Local Plan has not been adhered to, in retaining parking capacity at summer 1996 levels, and that the County Council had street parking by 50%, according to its own paper. This demonstrates a lack of 'joined up' government. Over the last few years, the Peak District has got quieter north of Bakewell. There is also a low correlation between bed nights and visits to pubs, etc.

Destination Management Partnership wants to attract people to stay overnight for short breaks. Also want to make sure people, once here, know about local attractions through joint promotion, from accommodation providers to attractions.

In a seaside area, you might expect a parking meter, but in Peak District, not necessarily. People seem to expect to be able to park for free in the countryside.

There is obviously tension about parking between residents, visitors and businesses. Everyone needs to work together to find the best solution.

Need to be more creative about parking issues in Hope Valley. For example, on holidays / bank holidays in the Lake District, there are occasional parking areas (with charges) in school playing fields, etc– how about looking for those in the Hope Valley?

In relation to visitor numbers – there has been a general reduction in numbers this year. Need to look for local initiatives, to encourage people to come to area.

Season tickets – residents can have permit for NP car parks and need to contact the National Park Authority Offices.

DDDC – visitors need to spend money as well as stay. There are many great products in the Peak District, but if people don't know about them, they won't use them.

3. Panel talking about quality, but is there going to be any support for businesses in customer care.

Plenty support available on websites, but also Destination Management Partnership has a Quality Scheme – an information pack will be sent out about it.

4. Grindleford resident – Park and Ride facilities provide a low cost parking option in major cities. What consideration has been given to Park and Ride schemes here?

Excellent suggestion. We need to look to our urban neighbours, where over half of visitors come from. Their park and ride facilities could also have buses into National Park, as well as into cities. Already discussing this with Oldham, but would like to talk with others.

Upper Derwent has had significant investment, but has proved difficult to find the space for parking. We need to learn the lessons from this experience.