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## **Market Town Welcome**

### **Destination Plan for Wooler**

#### **REPORT TO**

**One NorthEast, Northumberland Strategic Partnership and  
Northumberland Tourism**

**June 2008**

## Report From



## In Partnership With



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## Executive Summary

This Destination Plan for Alnwick will drive action for the partnership of organisations that are involved in tourism, town development and the visitor economy within Alnwick and its immediate hinterland. It covers the period from March 2008 to 2018.

Wooler will develop its tourism potential and strengthen its identity in the eyes of visitors by working towards its future vision.

The Vision for Wooler is:

Wooler is recognised as a Market Town of distinction, Gateway to the Cheviots and the Northumberland National Park. It offers a unique and wide ranging experience for visitors of all tastes and age groups.

Located on the edge of the Northumberland National Park with the Cheviot Hills as a backdrop, Wooler is a natural hub for exploring the surrounding countryside and the whole of North Northumberland. The town itself has interesting and appealing specialist shops, it has been marketed well and through the website you can find out all about Wooler and the area of Glendale. There is a wide range of accommodation, the area is abundant with local speciality food, the heritage, arts, crafts and culture are well known and the rich flora and fauna held in high regard.

Most of all, the people who visit Wooler experience a very warm welcome, wonderful tranquillity and a place where they can be as active or as relaxed as they wish.

The objectives of this destination plan are:

1. To strengthen Wooler's identity and profile as an attractive visitor destination.
2. To broaden Wooler's visitor segments and to attract higher spending visitors, complementing the current visitor market which will continue to be an important part of the visitor economy.
3. To establish Wooler as a year round destination, encouraging short breaks throughout the year.
4. To better promote the attractions and activities available in and around Wooler
5. To increase visitor satisfaction levels, which will in turn encourage repeat visits and personal recommendations.
6. To encourage more visitors to walk, cycle and use public transport.
7. To develop a sustainable visitor economy offering excellent service, customer care and value for money.
8. To widen the range and improve the quality of the retail and food and drink offers in the town.
9. To encourage new business investment.
10. To encourage and support collaboration between local organisations and businesses to enable joint delivery of the actions.

## The Strategy

The strategy which the town needs to adopt is to focus on its strengths and unique selling points. Wooler has an excellent location as the Gateway to the Cheviots and on the edge of Northumberland National Park, and this strategy aims to capitalise on this by meeting the expectations of future visitor markets - whilst still catering for the more traditional, current visitor markets. Wooler aims to focus on the more outgoing and higher spending visitor segments that will broaden its appeal, attract more higher-spending visitors and make its visitor economy much more sustainable for the future.

Most effort and action needs to be focused on areas where there will be most impact. This could include important town management issues, major new developments or attracting an iconic/specialist business to the town which can raise the profile of a whole town. Such developments can lift both the confidence and aspirations of businesses and organisations, as well as generating PR coverage.

## Wooler Destination Priorities

<p>1. Marketing and promoting Wooler as a hub of activity</p>	<p>Wooler occupies an excellent location as the Gateway to the Cheviots and on the edge of the National Park. It is also served by an extensive infrastructure of linking roads, making Wooler the 'centre of a spider's-web'. It is seen that an opportunity exists to sell Wooler as a hub of activity – a base that people can use to explore the surrounding hinterland and engage in a multitude of activities. Walking and cycling routes currently exist around Wooler and there are a sprinkling of alternative activities, such as rock climbing, paraponting and downhill mountain biking developing in the area. Wooler aims to capitalise on these activities on its door step by marketing and promoting the town as a destination where all these activities can be enjoyed.</p>
<p>2. Improving gateways and signing</p>	<p>On entering Wooler it is clear that there is no sense of arrival and when driving along the A697 it is also possible to pass Wooler without even realising it. The need to create defined gateways and to improve the signage to the town is seen as an essential step in increasing visitor numbers and also in achieving some of the other priorities mentioned in this plan. Funding for two of the four main approaches to the town has already been secured and this plan suggests the need to secure funding for the remaining approaches.</p>
<p>3. Town guide, website and town trail</p>	<p>In order to achieve the priority of marketing and promoting Wooler as a hub of activity, the town guide and website need to be updated. Within the next 12 months it is feasible that the town guide and website undergo a review to ensure that they are 'selling' Wooler in the best possible way. Further to this it is</p>

	<p>suggested that the town guide is re-developed to coincide with these updates. To achieve this, a fingerpost-based history and heritage trail is suggested. Finally, this project creates scope for an associated Glendale guide/map which would help to develop linkages to other areas and activities in the region.</p>
<p>4. An independent review of the TIC</p>	<p>The question of whether or not the TIC occupies the best position at its current location has been the topic of debate in Wooler for some time. Also, with the imminent local government restructuring and the ensuing uncertain future of the role and ownership of TIC's, an independent review is considered to be a high priority. The review should aim to guide the town on the best location for the TIC as well as detail its future role in local tourism. A review would come at an important time for the town as there are currently several potential sites available if it was considered necessary to move the TIC. Redpath's Yard, which incidentally is also a main priority of this destination plan, is a potential site which would also benefit from the outcomes of the review and having a presence of the TIC on the High Street is also an appealing idea to many consultees.</p>
<p>5. Redpath's Yard</p>	<p>Redpath's Yard is located just off the A697 at the foot of the town and is seen as a crucial location for enticing visitors further up the road and into the town centre. The site is large and provides an opportunity for a development of some kind that will enhance the current tourism offer. It has been suggested that the site may be the key to linking the town with the many activities on offer in the region, developing Wooler as a 'hub of activity' and creating a presence for the National Park. Further suggestions regarding the potential use of the site include developing a tourism facility that offers a 'suite of services and activities' such as outdoor clothing and equipment outlets, cafes, restaurants and bars etc. Whatever the final decision on the use of the site may be, this study has identified the necessity for it to be recognised by regional development agencies as potentially a major economic investment project. It is suggested that ownership of the yard is achieved to ensure that future developments on the site will be tourism related.</p>
<p>6. Co-ordinating local groups</p>	<p>It is essential that in a small town such as Wooler, local groups do not operate in isolation. A structured system that leads to co-ordination of local groups would ensure plans and proposals are acted upon.</p> <p>One important group to co-ordinate with is Cycle Trax, which is supporting the creation of cycle hubs in Wooler and Haltwhistle.</p>

	<p>Currently at proposal stage, it would be essential to create links with this project which goes towards meeting some of the objectives of the Market Town Welcome programme.</p> <p>Another project to note is the Berwick Youth Project, due to run in spring 2009, which aims to set up a trainee programme for young people in outdoor activities. Looking specifically at developing leaders, this project could be essential in providing trained staff to run the outdoor activity centres that are developed / co-ordinated as a result of this study.</p> <p>It is suggested that the 'Belonging Community of Glendale Forum' should be at the forefront of any initiative that aims to co-ordinate local groups.</p>
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### Common Market Town Welcome Themes

The Programme has also identified many ideas for joint working between market towns in Northumberland. The main areas for collaboration include:

- Outdoor activities - walking, cycling, water-sports and nature based tourism
- History and heritage
- Food and drink
- Art, culture and events
- Business support and training
- Planning, infrastructure and destination management
- Promotion of investment opportunities

County organisations such as Northumberland Tourism and Northumberland Strategic Partnership can play a key role by facilitating this joint working and leading on county wide initiatives.

## 1. Introduction

This Destination Plan for Wooler is an action plan for the whole partnership of organisations that are involved in delivering the visitor experience within the town and its hinterlands. It covers the period from March 2008 to 2018, and is designed to be a working document that can be added to as the town and its partners identify new opportunities for development.

The Plan provides a framework and rationale for investment in the tourism sector within the town and helps to clarify how the key partners and agencies can work to help develop the tourism potential of Wooler.

The plan's purpose is to:

- help develop the tourism potential of Wooler and strengthen its identity for visitors;
- encourage the cross fertilisation of ideas and identify the top priorities for action;
- provide a framework and rationale for investment and development planning in the tourism sector within the town, including harnessing private sector potential; and
- help to clarify how partners and agencies can work together to map out a way forward for the next few years.

### 1.1. Background and Rationale

Miller Research, in partnership with Alison Caffyn (Tourism Consultant) and AMT-I were commissioned by One NorthEast, Northumberland Tourism and Northumberland Strategic Partnership to develop a destination plan model which could be applied to market towns within the region. The project has been run in six market towns in Northumberland: Berwick, Alnwick, Amble, Haltwhistle, Seahouses and Wooler. In five of those towns (all except Berwick) work has recently been completed on developing their retail distinctiveness and competitiveness<sup>1</sup>. This work highlighted the growing importance of tourism to each town, and the destination plans now aim to complement the retail work and highlight the towns' tourism potential.

It is important to focus on tourism as the visitor economy has become and will continue to be one of the most important economic sectors, employing a high proportion of local people and contributing directly or indirectly to a large part of the local economy. Recent research (STEAM 2006) demonstrates this:

- **Northumberland receives 1.8 million overnight tourists**, spending **6.6 million nights** in the area, plus **8 million day visits**
- Overnight visitors spent £248 million, day visitors spent a further £142 million, plus indirect revenue of £228 million giving a total contribution of tourism to the Northumberland economy of **£621 million**
- Approximately **11,400 jobs** (full time equivalents) were supported by direct tourist expenditure, a further **2,650 jobs** were supported by indirect revenue.

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<sup>1</sup> Work carried out by Miller Research (UK) Ltd

Tourism not only supports businesses, jobs and suppliers but it is particularly significant in rural areas and market towns where there are fewer alternatives. In addition:

- Visitors help support local heritage, culture and community services
- Tourism is a reason to conserve special buildings, historic sites, beautiful landscapes and important wildlife sites
- Tourism is a vital element in regenerating an area

## 1.2. Strategic Context

The strategic context for this work is the Regional Economic Strategy which aims to foster the renaissance of key rural settlements as drivers of regional growth. The North East England Tourism Strategy (2005-10) identifies regional objectives, including increasing the number of UK and overseas visitors year round and increasing visitor spend. The strategy aims to deliver increased employment, productivity and investment in tourism whilst increasing visitor satisfaction and conserving the region's natural, heritage and cultural assets. It identifies market towns as key elements in the attraction of the North East for visitors and proposes that towns should develop plans to make improvements in facilities to meet the needs of increased visitors. It highlights the potential for making more of regional food, improved shopping and public art as well as basics such as visitor information and signing. Studies have also been recently completed into developing cruise tourism along the North East coastline and into the potential for making more of events and festivals.

At a County level the key document is the Northumberland Area Tourism Management Plan. It presents the Tourism Vision for Northumberland as

*'to establish the county as the premier rural destination in the UK, balancing the needs and expectations of the international and UK visitor, businesses and communities whilst protecting and further developing the County's exceptional environment and rich cultural heritage'.*

It highlights particular challenges, such as the seasonality of tourism in the County which impacts on the economy, jobs, cash flow and investment, and the relatively poor food and retail offer for visitors compared with other areas. The Plan identifies objectives including developing a higher profile for Northumberland, encouraging new sustainable tourism businesses and a more entrepreneurial culture which will help increase jobs, skills, investment and safeguard local services such as shops, pubs, museums etc.

In Wooler this plan needs to link to other local planning frameworks as well as relevant local studies still ongoing such as the feasibility of the old Co-op store and proposals for the development of a cycling hub in the area.

## 1.3. Process and Partnership

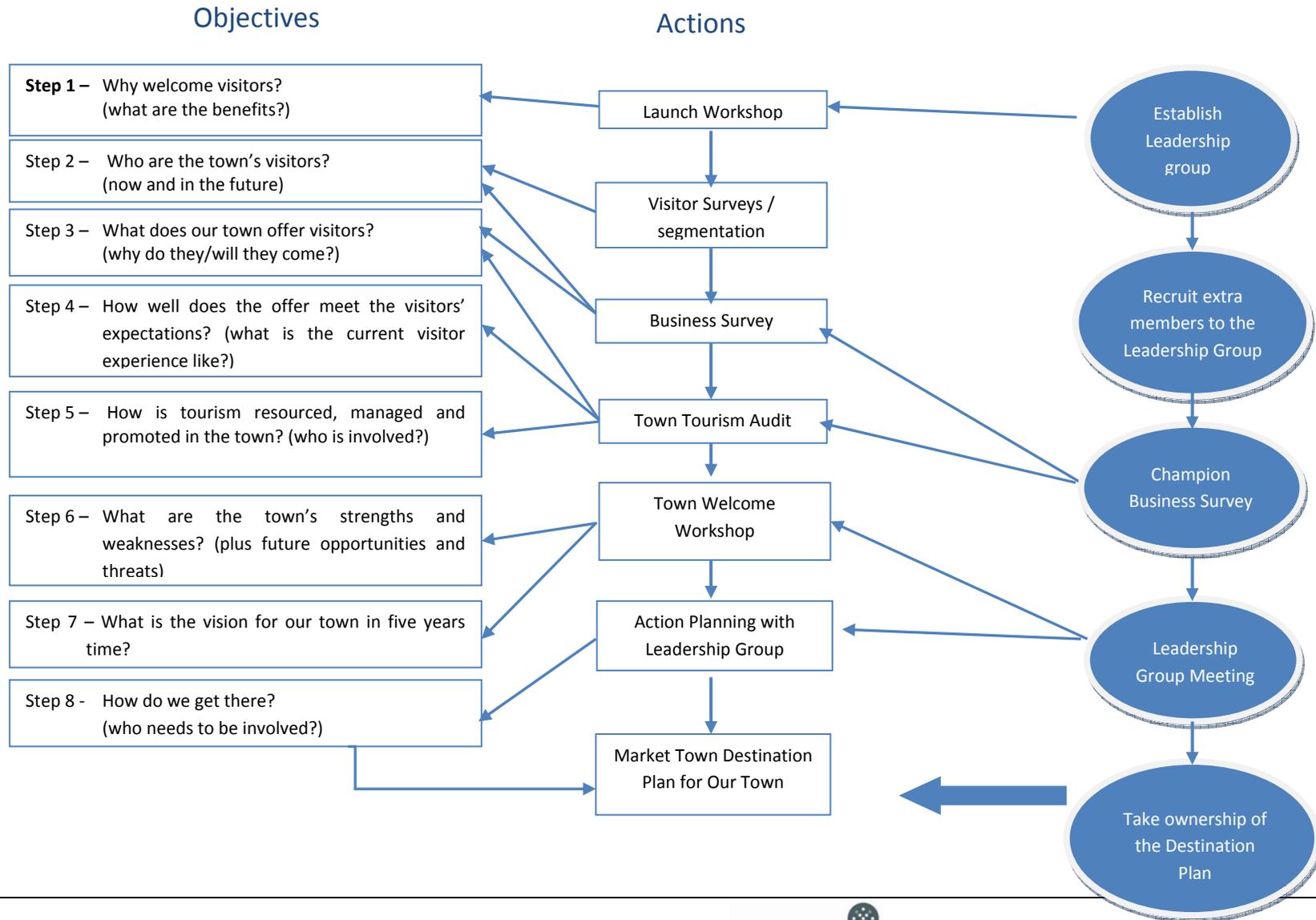
There have been two main stages to the work. The first involved researching good practice from amongst other UK market towns and producing a template for the development of a destination management plan that could be applied to market towns in the region. The second stage involved first piloting and testing the template in Berwick before rolling it out to the other five towns.

The process aimed to be as inclusive as possible developing a local leadership group in each town which involved tourism businesses and local organisations as well as the town development trusts, local authorities and tourism agencies. The following stages helped structure this destination plan:

1. Understanding the rationale - why welcome visitors, what are the benefits for a town?
2. Identifying current and future visitors to the town
3. Identifying what the town can offer visitors
4. Considering how well the town meets the needs of its visitors, now and in the future
5. Understanding how tourism is resourced, promoted and managed in the town
6. Understanding the town's strengths and weaknesses
7. Creating a vision of where the town wants to be in 5 – 10 years from a visitor perspective
8. Identifying priorities and actions in order to achieve that vision

The diagram overleaf illustrates the project process described above:

Figure 1 – Destination Plan Template



The process has also incorporated the principles of the 'VICE model' for local destination management. This model was developed by the national tourism agencies and Tourism Management Institute to encourage the sustainable development of tourism. It aims to ensure positive outcomes for Visitors, the tourism Industry, local Communities and the built and natural Environment. So the destination plans aim to develop tourism which:

- Welcomes, involves and satisfies Visitors
- Achieves a prosperous and profitable Industry
- Engages and benefits host Communities
- Protects and enhances the local Environment

The Wooler Destination Plan has been produced through a number of meetings that were held in the town, involving key regional and local agencies and local businesses, organisations and residents - as well as an open workshop to which local tourism related businesses were invited. Appendix 1 lists the people and organisations that have input to the content and shape of this Plan. In addition a Leadership Group was convened for Wooler out of the names listed. The Leadership Group has been responsible for leading the Market Town Welcome project at a local level and will be responsible for implementing the actions listed in this plan.

The following meetings were held in the town that have helped to develop this Plan:

1. Meeting of the Leadership Group – the group was presented with information and evidence about the town and its tourism offer. This information was obtained from a business survey and town audit that were carried out specifically for the Market Town Welcome project and previous research that had been conducted. The group used the information to develop a SWOT analysis of tourism provision in the town.
2. Town Workshop – a workshop was held in the town which was open to anyone with an interest in tourism development in Wooler. The group was asked to add to and amend the SWOT produced by the Leadership Group, help to identify current and future visitors, develop a vision of the town from a tourism perspective and start to identify actions to move towards this vision
3. Action Planning Session – the Leadership Group met to finalise the vision for the town and to prioritise the opportunities and actions that had emerged from the previous sessions.

In order to gather as many views as possible a business survey was made available on-line, which all businesses in Wooler were invited to take part in. A tourism audit was undertaken by members of the leadership group in order to document what is currently available in the town and where there are gaps in the tourism offer. The results of these activities are documented in subsequent sections and the full results can be found in the annex.

## 2. Vision and Objectives

### 2.1. Vision Statement

In 5-10 years time, Wooler will offer visitors a better welcome because...

Wooler is recognised as a Market Town of distinction, Gateway to the Cheviots and the Northumberland National Park. It offers a unique and wide ranging experience for visitors of all tastes and age groups.

Located on the edge of the Northumberland National Park with the Cheviot Hills as a backdrop, Wooler is a natural hub for exploring the surrounding countryside and the whole of North Northumberland. The town itself has interesting and appealing specialist shops, it has been marketed well and through the website you can find out all about Wooler and the area of Glendale. There is a wide range of accommodation, the area is abundant with local speciality food, the heritage, arts, crafts and culture are well known and the rich flora and fauna held in high regard.

Most of all, the people who visit Wooler experience a very warm welcome, wonderful tranquillity, and a place where they can be as active or as relaxed as they wish.

### 2.2. Objectives

The objectives for this destination plan are:

- To strengthen Wooler's identity and profile as an attractive visitor destination.
- To broaden Wooler's visitor segments and to attract higher spending visitors, complementing the current visitor market which will continue to be an important part of the visitor economy.
- To establish Wooler as a year round destination, encouraging short breaks throughout the year.
- To better promote the attractions and activities available in and around Wooler
- To increase visitor satisfaction levels which will in turn encourage repeat visits and personal recommendations.
- To encourage more visitors to walk, cycle and use public transport.
- To develop a sustainable visitor economy offering excellent service, customer care and value for money.
- To widen the range and improve the quality of the retail and food and drink offers in the town.
- To encourage new business investment.
- To encourage and support collaboration between local organisations and businesses to enable joint delivery of the actions.

### 3. Visitors to Wooler

#### 3.1. Visitor Survey

In 2003, a Destination Benchmarking Survey was undertaken in Wooler by Northumbria Tourist Board as part of the Northumberland Market Towns Benchmarking Project. This research was designed to provide an information base on the profile of tourism in Wooler, from which comparisons could be made in future years. The survey followed a standard methodology which allowed comparisons to be made with other destinations, including Market Towns in Northumberland, Market Towns nationally and other destination types (towns/cities, historic cities and resorts). While the data is now five years old it is still the most recent detailed information on visitors and provides a useful insight into the current/recent tourism market.

A total of 239 face-to-face interviews were conducted with visitors in Wooler during the summer of 2003. Interviews were carried out on a random basis in various locations throughout Wooler including outside the Cheviot Centre, outside 29b High Street and outside the Bank of Scotland.<sup>2</sup>

The following list highlights some useful data regarding visitors to Wooler:

- Relatively high proportion of first time visitors (36%)
- High proportion stay in town (30%) – mainly repeat visitors
- Good age range of visitors. High proportion of C1s
- Low proportion of overseas visitors
- 75% of those staying are from Northumbria
- 94% visitors on a leisure/holiday trip
- 59% staying visitors in static caravans
- Low visitor spend (£16.85 staying / £5.57 day visits)
- Average stay 6 nights (overnight) 2.17 hrs (day)
- 15% travelled by public transport
- Overall satisfaction levels good (but not very good)
- National Park is a big asset
- Parking viewed as good, but very expensive
- Lower than average scores for: Shopping, eating and drinking
- Higher than average scores for: TIC, places to visit, cleanliness, entertainment and toilets
- 87% would recommend Wooler to someone else

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<sup>2</sup> Taken from 'Wooler Visitor Survey 2003', Marketing Intelligence Unit, Northumbria Tourist Board; 2004.

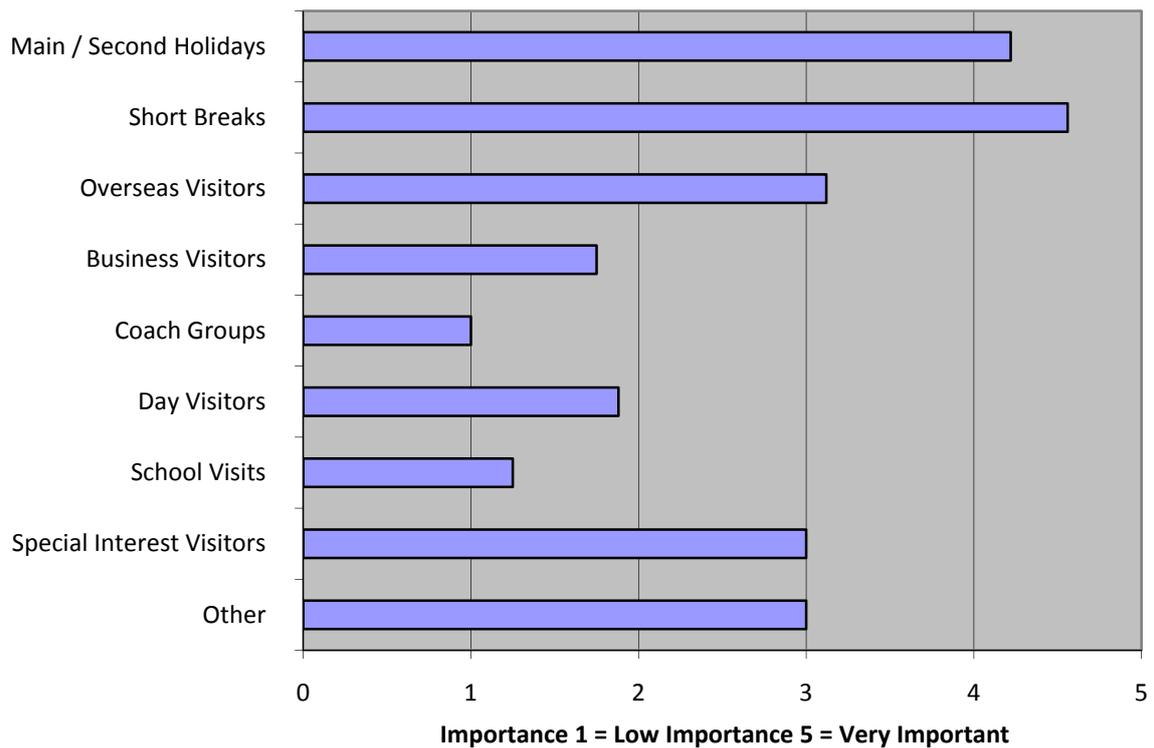
### **3.2. Business Survey**

As part of this study, a business survey was made available on-line and in hard copy for local businesses that have dealings with the visitor market. The purpose of the survey was to identify current tourism issues in the town that businesses are aware of and also if there are any opportunities to develop the appeal of the town. Respondents were also able to comment on visitors' likes and dislikes and provide thoughts on what will encourage visitors to stay longer or spend more.

There were 10 responses from the business community in Wooler and the large majority of those were bed & breakfast establishments. Other accommodation providers and retailers made up the rest of the respondents to the survey. Interestingly, approximately 60% of those surveyed indicated that they were planning expansion over the next year and when asked in what way, typical answers included increasing the number of clients or making physical expansions / improvements to existing assets. Respondents were generally positive in relation to current market conditions. Turnover was deemed to be slightly increasing on average and only 3 out of 10 reported that turnover was either staying the same or dropping.

#### **Visitor Profile**

When questioned about the importance of certain types of visitors on a scale of 1-5, where 5 is the most important and 1 the least, visitors who were on short breaks to Wooler were deemed to be the most important with an average score just over 4. Visitors who were on their main or second holiday were also considered a very important group and rather interestingly, overseas visitors were identified as the third most important group of visitors to Wooler which possibly contradicts the findings of the 2003 visitor survey which identified that 75% of visitors were from Northumbria. This may be indicative of a shift in the type of visitor in the 5 years since the last visitor survey, although the relatively small sample size and the type of respondents of this business survey should be taken into consideration when making comparisons. The types of visitor that were considered least important to the businesses that completed the survey were coach groups, closely followed by school visits and business visitors.

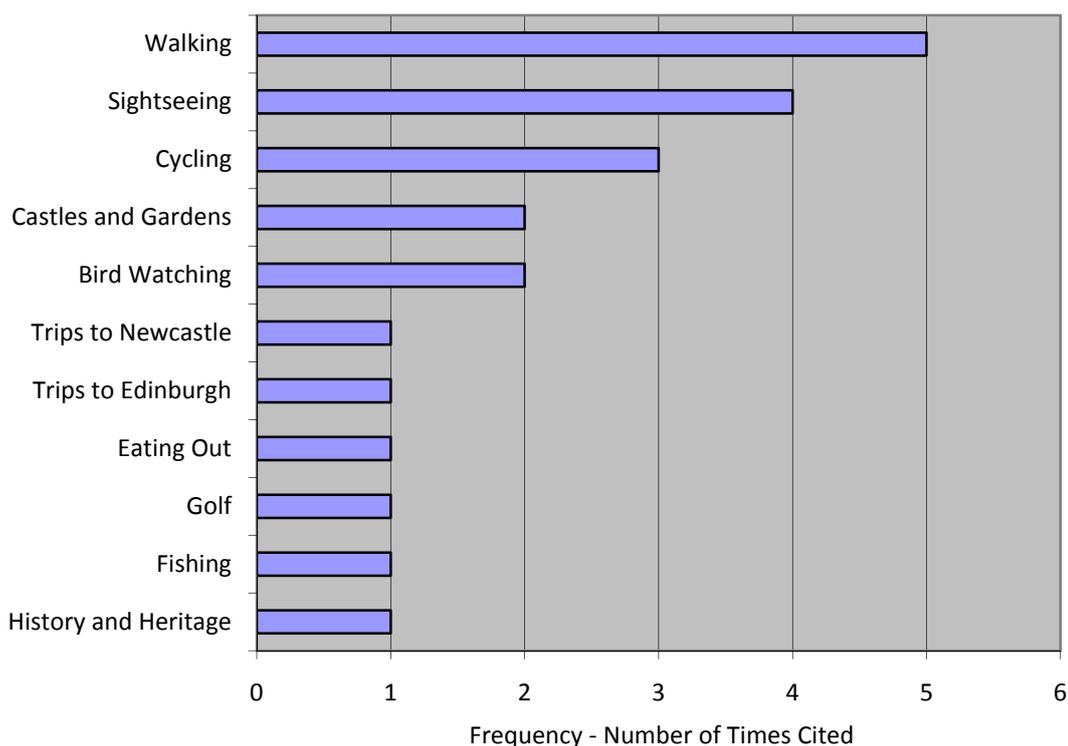


*Miller Research (UK) Ltd, Market Town Welcome, Business Survey 2008 9 Respondents*

### Activities Undertaken

Businesses were asked what activities visitors to Wooler undertake whilst they are in the area. The chart below indicates the number of times an activity was mentioned within the survey.

**Figure 2 : Activities undertaken by visitors to Wooler**

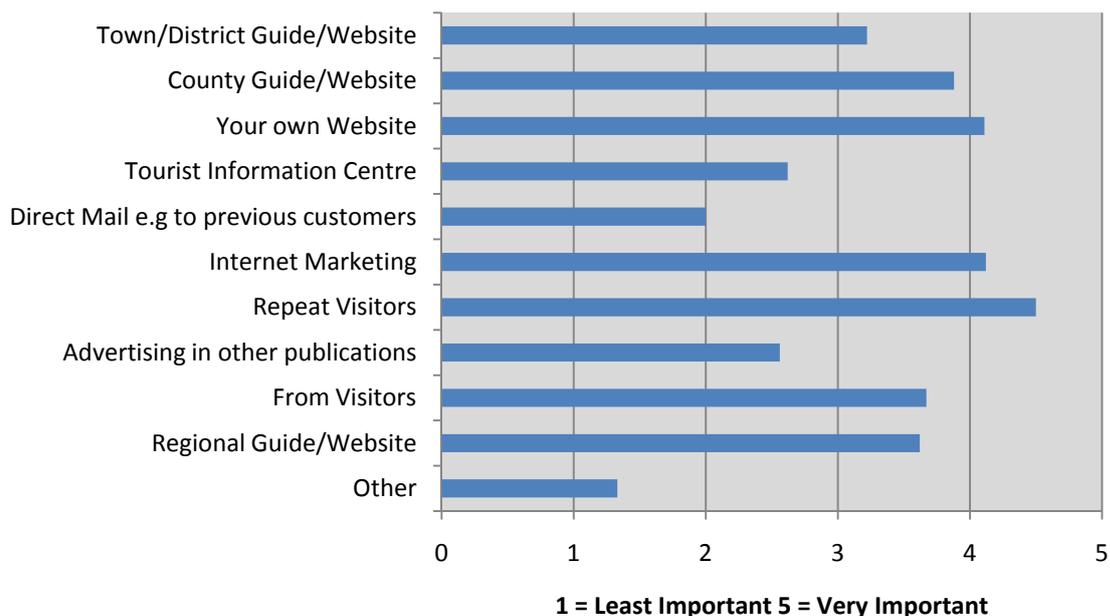


Source: Market Town Welcome Business Survey. Base 9 respondents

Walking, sightseeing and cycling are some of the main activities undertaken by visitors to Wooler. It is clear that the countryside around Wooler is a key motivator to a trip to the town for nature-based and activity holidays.

**Promotion and Marketing**

The graph below shows the responses recorded when asked what methods are most successful when advertising / securing bookings. Once again 1 is not very important and 5 the most important. The aggregated scores indicate that repeat visitors offer the most successful method of securing bookings / advertising, which supports the findings of the 2003 benchmarking survey. The second and third most important methods of securing bookings or advertising were through internet marketing or through the businesses’ own website. The lowest three scoring methods were the Tourist Information Centre, advertising in other publications and direct mail, for example to previous customers.



Miller Research (UK) Ltd, Market Town Welcome, Business Survey 2008

The full responses to the business survey can be found in Appendix 4.

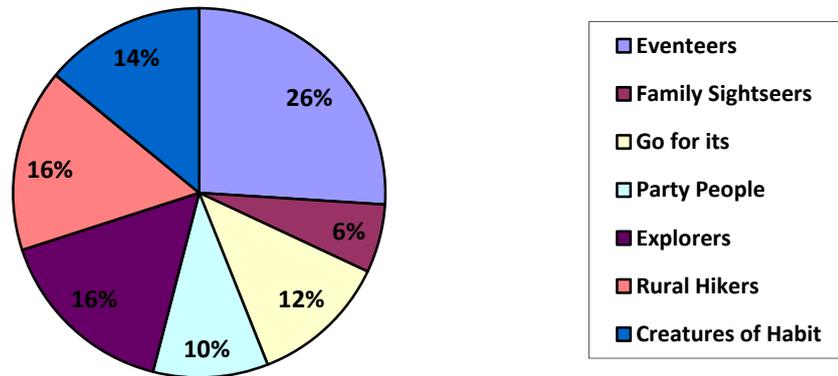
### 3.3. Segmentation – Visitor Profiles

In 2007 One NorthEast commissioned Arkenford to profile and segment visitors and non-visitors to the North East of England. The research used both the ArkLeisure model and a bespoke behavioural segmentation model. This study looked at both models and in most towns applied the ArkLeisure version as it is more widely used nationally and focuses on visitor motivations and values. In Wooler the bespoke model, which focuses more on visitor behaviour and activities, was felt to fit the visitor profiles well and was therefore adopted for use.

#### Bespoke Segmentation

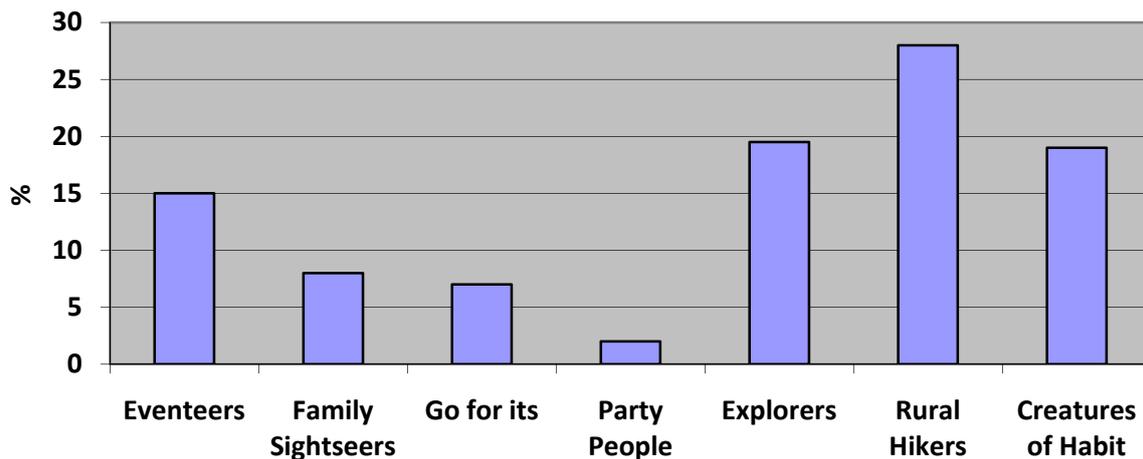
Activity data was used to create the bespoke segmentation for North East England visitors. Seven behavioural segments were created for the North East. The segmentation covers all leisure related trips, not all of which may appear as ‘typical’ discretionary holidays or short breaks.

**Figure 3: North East England Visitor Segments – Bespoke Model**



Whilst across the whole of the North East, Eventeers, Family Sightseers and Rural Hikers are the dominant sectors, the visitor profile is slightly different in Northumberland where Rural Hikers, Explorers or Creatures of Habit are more likely.

**Figure 4: Northumberland Visitor Segments – Bespoke Model**



In Wooler, the current visitor profile was identified during an exercise that ran at the workshop session and the results concur with the visitor profile of Northumberland. Rural Hikers, Explorers and Creatures of Habit were chosen as the segments that best described the type of visitor to Wooler and each is explained in greater detail below.

- Rural Hikers** – These people choose North East England for the countryside and scenery, but more so for the activities they can do in the countryside like serious walking. They are choosing North East England because it is somewhere new for them. Accommodation and food and drink account for the majority of this segment’s spending, but due to the fact that they are spending much of their time walking in the countryside, they are a low spending segment.
- Explorers** – People that are visiting North East England to explore the region and visit the heritage attractions on offer. This group are new to the area, being influenced by a destination they have not visited before and wanting to experience something new. They

spend a significant amount on accommodation but compared to a number of the other segments they do not spend a significant amount on other elements of their holiday.

- **Creatures of Habit** – These people are similar to Explorers but differ in the fact they are choosing North East England because it is a familiar location to them. They explore the towns and countryside as well as visiting historical and heritage attractions, but are looking to slow down and rejuvenate themselves. Other than the Family Sightseers this is the lowest spending segment.

## 4. The Tourism Offer

It is important to have a full understanding of what Wooler has to offer visitors. This includes current visitors' likes and dislikes about the town and also what the town has that could attract new and different types of visitors. To get a fuller understanding about what Wooler has to offer visitors, a comprehensive audit of the town was carried out. This included a quantitative element – a physical count of what is available and a qualitative element – quality scoring the provision. The full results of the town audit can be found in Appendix 3.

### 4.1. Town Audit

As discussed above a town audit of Wooler was undertaken in February 2008 which covered a range of services and facilities that visitors look for and appreciate. The audit looked to help the town appreciate its current offer and interest to visitors and also identify any problems, gaps or potential areas for further development. A full breakdown of the audit is included in Appendix 3, whilst the following section highlights the strengths and gaps present in the town.

Wooler has approximately 21 accommodation providers in the town which includes hotels, B&Bs, self-catering units, camping and caravan provision and youth hostels.

In terms of gaps in accommodation there are only a few small upmarket hotels/guest houses, there is limited self-catering units (especially in town) and there is perhaps scope for more quality pub accommodation.

Wooler has a number of historic attractions close by which includes castles, historic houses, hill forts and other ancient sites. There are also a number of sites of interest in the countryside which would appeal to nature-based tourists – such as the Northumberland National Park, St Cuthbert's Cave and Kyloe woods.

Only one attraction, Breamish Valley, was given a quality score of 5 - very good, exceeds visitor's expectations, is a draw for visitors in itself. The rest of the attractions are fairly evenly split between scores of 2 (adequate, but room for improvement), 3 (moderately good, meets most visitors' needs) or 4 (good, meets visitors' expectation and an asset to the area). The audit identified that there is little wet weather and out-of-season attractions.

There are a number of events in Wooler, such as the Glendale Festival and the annual carnival, although activity tends to be concentrated in the summer months. It was highlighted that there is very little activity in the winter. There is the opportunity to better promote and make more of existing events and attract more visitors to them.

Wooler has a good range of retail outlets which includes independent food shops, antiques, bookshops and gift shops. The Good Life shop is has been given a 5 on the quality rating, the majority of retailers have been rated a 3 or a 4. Only two shops were given a score of 2.

In terms of gaps, Wooler lacks a regular market, outdoor leisure goods suppliers and a clothing store.

It is estimated that only 20% of shops are open on a Sunday and only 5% open in the early evening (5pm – 7pm).

There are 17 eating establishments in the town, four restaurants, three takeaways, six coffee/tea shops and four pubs serving food. Generally the eating places have been given a quality score of 3 or 4. All of the takeaways were rated either as a 1 or a 2. Around 45% of the eating establishments are open on a Sunday and a similar proportion is open in the early evening.

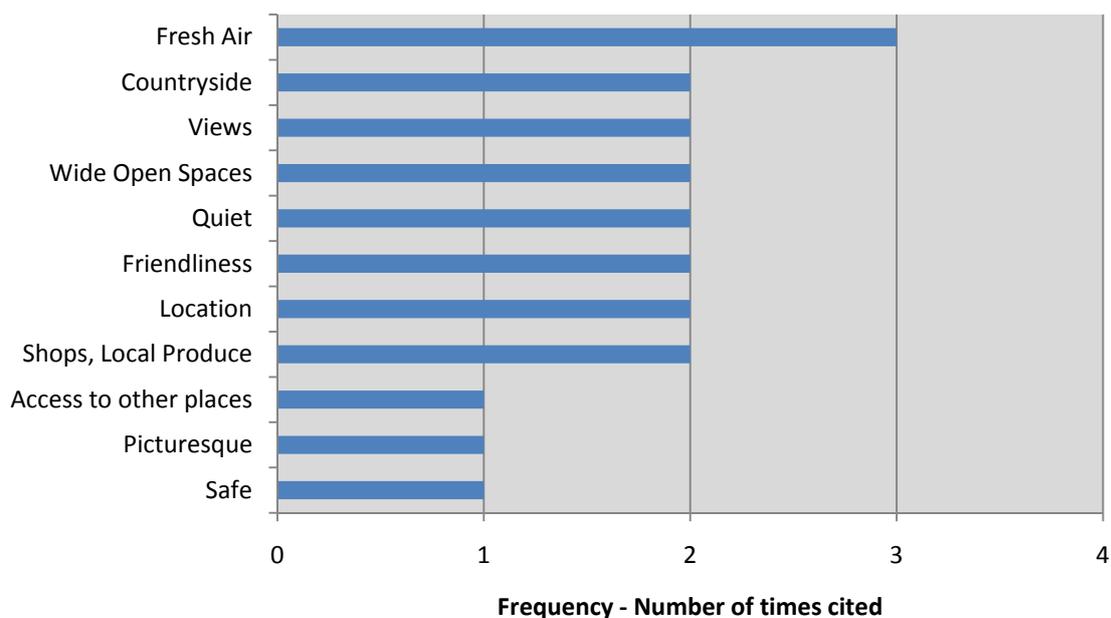
In terms of gaps, it would be beneficial for there to be a good quality (scoring 5) restaurant within the town.

There are a number of walking and cycling routes near to the town as well as a number of other activities including riding, bike hire, golf and fishing amongst others. Gaps include the lack of a cinema, theatre or other live entertainment venue and wet weather activities. However it is difficult for a town of Wooler's size to support such facilities.

#### 4.2. Business Survey

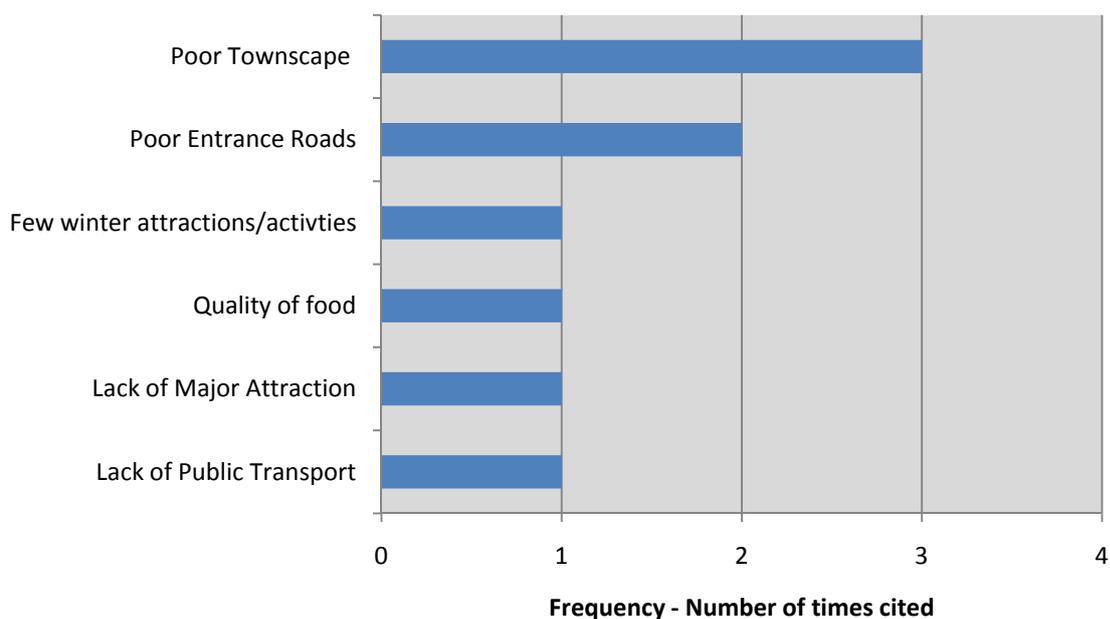
The survey asked respondents to name the type of things visitors to Wooler enjoy doing and things which they do not like about the town.

**Figure 5 : What Visitors Like about Wooler**



*Miller Research (UK) Ltd, Market Town Welcome, Business Survey 2008 9 Respondents*

**Figure 6 : What Visitors Dislike about Wooler**



*Miller Research (UK) Ltd, Market Town Welcome, Business Survey 2008 8 Respondents*

### Possible Improvements

The business survey asked respondents what kind of improvements or developments they would like to see in the town in order to attract more visitors or keep current visitors in the town for longer. The list below highlights the responses from the business survey, a fuller discussion of potential developments is presented in section 6.1.

- Change the look of the Market place and High Street.
- Pubs in the centre of the town more geared to the tourist trade.
- The main road through the town is very derelict. This is the gateway to Wooler and many visitors must pass by and think 'what a shanty town', when in fact the main part of Wooler is very pretty. Some one should do something!!!
- Improvement of the ONE website to promote rural areas and make it easier for visitors.
- Better public toilets.
- Wider marketing, Wooler seems to get forgotten in favour of Alnwick and Berwick on the coast.
- Making the village centre more attractive.
- Some increase in sporting facilities e.g. better gym or swimming pool.
- Better bus service to Edinburgh or Newcastle.
- Change of attitudes - tourists are welcome, and essential.

- Easy access to information about what's on both in Northumberland and in the Border region
- There are wonderful foods produced locally some occasional markets and food promotion would be interesting
- The parking needs to be sorted out in Wooler and there is no 'centre' or focal point. Most of our guests only get to Wooler at night to eat so they miss the shops, they are always going elsewhere during the day. Part of the problem is that unless you are staying in the centre of the town, the roads miss the high street and there is nothing to catch the eye to pull them in. The hills behind are fantastic walking but I am always surprised at the lack of knowledge people have about the Cheviots - they can name hills and valleys in Snowdonia! However, part of the attraction once they get into the hills... is the lack of people. The hardened walkers also comment on the lack of shops selling walking gear in the area.

### Promotion of Wooler

Suggestions received from businesses regarding the marketing and promotion of the town included comments about current and future promotion of Wooler.

- Berwick Borough Council has done us no favours in promoting our business with bad practice relating to the advertising brochure hence not participating this year. Berwick town centre is not on my list of promotion to our visitors as their time with us is short and there are lots more scenic and exciting places - I hate Berwick town centre and think it is drab.
- I feel that Wooler should be part of the Alnwick promotion as well as Berwick.
- Further development of the Wooler website.
- Training of TIC staff.
- Better support from One NorthEast
- It is good that the town uses its location and position to attract visitors. Local shops are good but could open on Sundays in the summer time. Could do with some public toilets and some nice hanging baskets etc for the village centre.
- Free car parking needed.
- Future promotion in Wooler should include much more information about what happens across the border. The tourist information produced by the Borders Tourist Authority is so much better and if you live 11miles from the border there are great things to do there.
- The gardens in the area both within Northumberland and in the Border region could make a real draw for visitors but would have to include both Scottish and Northumbrian ones
- The town web site needs to be higher profile when people search on Northumberland and the information on it needs to be kept up to date.

### 4.3. SWOT

A SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis has been carried out and completed using the results of the business survey and town audit, and exercises conducted at the town meetings and workshops.

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Real ale pubs with potential to meet needs of "Go for it" market</li> <li>• The great outdoors</li> <li>• Central location for other places - the spiders web of roads from Wooler</li> <li>• Good community</li> <li>• Existing Glendale Trust activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not enough B&amp;Bs</li> <li>• Lack of serviced accommodation generally</li> <li>• Current pub offer</li> <li>• Low aspirations</li> <li>• Not marketing low season (Nov-Apr)</li> <li>• Poor signage</li> <li>• No joined-up information on the activities and attractions available to visitors</li> <li>• Seasonal income affecting business confidence</li> <li>• Location of TIC?</li> </ul>
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outdoor activities on Wooler's doorstep</li> <li>• Attracting "Go for its"</li> <li>• Outdoor festival / iconic event?</li> <li>• Build on the existing infrastructure of pubs and restaurants</li> <li>• Provide a central / key information point for activities in the area</li> <li>• Remarket the offer to "Explorers" and "Rural Hikers"</li> <li>• Make better use of:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Edwin's Palace</li> <li>○ Hill forts</li> <li>○ Archaeology / Pre-history</li> <li>○ Golfing infrastructure</li> <li>○ Low rainfall - excellent microclimate</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Closure of the youth hostel or caravan parks</li> <li>• Competition from Scottish tourism</li> <li>• Lack of joined up thinking between ONE NorthEast, sub-regional agencies and local operators</li> <li>• Parking issues</li> <li>• Develop links with school field trips?</li> <li>• Customer service events for local operators</li> <li>• Better links between town and caravan sites</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ History as a health resort</li><li>• PR Campaign through magazine articles</li><li>• Develop links with school field trips?</li><li>• Customer service events for local operators</li><li>• Better links between town and caravan sites</li></ul>	
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## 5. Destination Management and Promotion

### 5.1. The Strategy

Wooler has an excellent location as the Gateway to the Cheviots and on the edge of Northumberland National Park. Tourism plays an extremely important role in the changing local economy. Visitor markets are changing relatively rapidly with increased competition from overseas destinations, easily accessible by cheap flights. Visitors have higher expectations and are more demanding. They are looking for relaxing, fun and interesting things to do in their precious holiday time. Wooler will have to grasp new opportunities to ensure that the town caters for the needs of more demanding visitors. In fact there is a serious risk that if the tourism sector does not address the changing markets, the visitor economy of Wooler could gradually decline, become increasingly less sustainable and more difficult to turn around as time goes on.

The strategy which the town needs to adopt is to focus on its strengths and unique selling points and to develop and promote these to meet the expectations of the future visitor markets - whilst still catering for more traditional current visitor markets. By focusing on the more outgoing and higher spending visitor segments Wooler will broaden its appeal, attract more higher-spending visitors and make its visitor economy much more sustainable for the future.

Most effort and action need to be focused on areas where there will be most impact. This could include important town management issues, major new developments or attracting an iconic/specialist business to the town which can raise the profile of a whole town. Such developments can lift both the confidence and aspirations of other businesses and organisations, as well as generating PR coverage.

There is a need to build confidence in the visitor economy that Wooler **will** attract more upmarket sectors and **will** become a more desirable destination, in order for individuals and organisations to invest in their businesses and properties, to attract new business. All partners need to work together to make it happen and it will require effort and investment from private, public and voluntary sectors to make the step change over the next few years.

The next section illustrates the future target markets that Wooler wishes to focus on, before identifying what the future visitor experience in Wooler could be.

#### Future Target Markets

Demographic and social trends have led to all visitors having increasing expectations of quality and service. The more upmarket groups already form the major proportion of visitors as they take more holidays - some are now taking as many as four or five short breaks in the UK each year. These visitors have more money to spend, although it is often over a shorter period. In order for Wooler to capitalise on such demographic changes, an exercise was undertaken at the workshop session that aimed to identify the segments that Wooler would like to attract in the future.

In line with regional and Northumberland tourism strategies the agreed approach within Wooler is to try to attract and cater for higher spend visitor segments than currently visit the town, whilst being careful not to alienate the current visitor segment which will continue to stay in Wooler into the future. It was therefore decided that the groups Wooler will aim to attract in the future are:

- **Go for its** This is a very active group, willing to try anything. Often young, male and in groups. They are keen on countryside, scenery, sporting activities and serious walking.
- **Explorers** This group enjoy exploring the area, visiting heritage attractions, have often not visited the area before and want to experience something new. They are often older couples.
- **Creatures of habit** This group are similar to explorers but have been here before and enjoy a familiar destination. They want to relax, explore and visit heritage attractions

It was decided that a new segment of visitors - '**go for its**', should be attracted to Wooler. These are higher spending<sup>3</sup> than current groups and can make the most of the widely varying attractions that the area has to offer. The omission of rural hikers from the list of future visitors to Wooler was justified with arguments that suggested that as the infrastructure is developed to attract the new market, rural hikers (which incidentally visit Wooler already) will also become catered for as the general 'outdoor offer' to attract the 'go for its' is developed.

The developments and actions that follow reflect the needs, values and interests of these target markets in this destination plan. The next section examines the extent to which Wooler's current tourism offer will relate to the expectations of future target visitors and will subsequently identify actions required to get there.

### Meeting Future Visitor Expectations

The results of this exercise are highlighted below and the full results can be found in Appendix 6.

### Meeting Future Visitor Expectations

Having established the current visitor segments as explained earlier, an exercise was undertaken that required the participants to take on the identity of one of the segments and perform a virtual visit to the town – identifying the things they would do whilst on their trip, where they would stay, where they would dine and so on, in order to identify current gaps. These gaps could subsequently be addressed in the action planning session to produce the proposals.

The results of this exercise are highlighted below and the full results can be found in Appendix 6.

Explorers visit North East England to explore the region and visit the heritage attractions on offer. This group are new to the area, being influenced by a destination they have not visited before and wanting to experience something new. Creatures of Habit are somewhat similar to the explorers but

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<sup>3</sup> This was decided in the workshop meeting following an open discussion based on the Spend Rankings of the identified segmentation groups - Appendix 5

differ in the fact that they are choosing North East England because it is a familiar location to them. They are doing similar activities in terms of exploring the towns and the countryside as well as visiting historical and heritage attractions but are looking to slow down and rejuvenate themselves.

Explorers and Creatures of Habit will enjoy window shopping around Wooler. Both groups will enjoy walks in the Cheviots and National Park and along the coast and will visit the area’s historic properties. They come to Wooler for its central location and the tranquillity of the area.

These groups will not like the general townscape in Wooler and feel that parts of the town need smartening up. Creatures of Habit may be dissatisfied with the quality of the evening food provision and extent to which local produce is used and available in the town.

In terms of what these groups may want in the future, Explorers may be looking for an indoor attraction and a more varied evening offer. The ‘creatures of habit’ may also like an indoor attraction and also require better public transport in order to fully appreciate the tourism offer in and around Wooler.

‘Go for Its’ are a very active segment that seems willing to give many things a try. They are a young segment with a male bias and are most likely to be travelling in an adult only group. They are interested in the countryside and the scenery where they undertake their activities, which include sporting activities and serious walking. They are not interested in “roughing it”, as most are choosing to stay in hotels or guest houses and B&Bs.

Go for its will like to spend time in the local pubs in Wooler for good food and drink and to meet local people. They are likely to spend their time out in the countryside walking or cycling, or out at the coast trying surfing or other watersports.

Go for its will be looking for good quality pubs where there is a good atmosphere. They would like to see an outdoor activity shop.

## 5.2. The Future Visitor Experience

The overall vision for Wooler as a visitor destination is given in section **Error! Reference source not found.** The tables below expand on the vision and give a more detailed description of what each visitor segment would like to see in Wooler in the future.

<b>Explorers</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A unique and special identity</li> <li>• Good quality, varied indoor attractions</li> <li>• Wider and varied evening offer</li> <li>• Better quality leisure facilities, golf, badminton, squash, bowls, gym, sauna etc</li> <li>• Better information, more joined up approach to attractions</li> <li>• Attractive entrance to the town and streetscape</li> </ul>
<b>Creatures of habit</b>

- Decent website to pull it all together
- New creatures of habit – attract for a specific reason (specialist groups) e.g. Photography, art, wildlife etc.
- Good information, TIC on the high street to connect people
- Need training in the TIC - currently they don't know all about the archaeology or history etc.
- The bottom road needs to be upgraded to attract people into the town
- Colourful, picturesque, with more specialist shops such as ladies boutique, food centres, clothes?
- Focus at the centre of the town
- Attract specialist groups – themed events
- Training for tourism
- Website to showcase things to do near + far
- Linking to other regional attractions
- How can we attract people from further afield? Especially foreign tourists? Through nearby cities?

**Go for its**

- There would be a presence of the TIC and National Park in the Town centre
- Better rural transport to the coast and the Cheviots etc
- A Website/webpages for outdoor pursuits
- Good pub food with atmosphere and ale
- A wider variety of accommodation
- Better access for cycling, horse riding and canoeing
- Maintenance of existing routes to accommodate more people
- New routes for outdoor pursuits

## Summary

The visioning exercise enables gaps in the tourism offer to be identified and also allows for strengths that already exist to be promoted and marketed to potential visitors. In summary, Wooler is seen as a central hub of activity that visitors can use as a base to explore many other destinations in and around Northumberland. Most of the physical infrastructure that appeals to the visitor segments identified during this process already exists. The Cheviots and the proximity of the National Park are a great strength to Wooler and the tourist industry really needs to capitalise on this. The action planning session kept these priorities in mind and the proposals that materialised are based upon them. In addition, the town must improve the food and drink and accommodation offer to make the offer in Wooler more distinctive and meet the needs of the visitors who are looking for local flavour.

The following section sets out the destination plan priorities before explaining in greater detail the programme of actions that came out of the action planning session.

### 5.3. Destination Priorities

The exercise in section 5.1 demonstrated that the town and its surrounding area has a number of strengths to offer its target visitors, but also that there are a number of common themes or areas for improvement that would enable the town to become more attractive to its target markets. Wooler needs to focus on four main priorities:

1. Marketing and promoting Wooler as a hub of activity
2. Improving gateways and signing
3. Town guide, website and the town trail
4. An independent review of the TIC

In addition, two other areas have been identified which are required to help the town operate as an effective destination - to join things up, attract visitors, manage their impacts and enhance their visits. These are:

5. Redpath's Yard
6. Co-ordinating local groups

The following table identifies the priorities in more detail;

<p>1. Marketing and promoting Wooler as a hub of activity</p>	<p>Wooler occupies an excellent location as the Gateway to the Cheviots and on the edge of the National Park. It is also served by an extensive infrastructure of linking roads, making Wooler the 'centre of a spider's-web'. It is seen that an opportunity exists to sell Wooler as a hub of activity – a base that people can use to explore the surrounding hinterland and engage in a multitude of activities. Walking and cycling routes currently exist around Wooler and there is a sprinkling of alternative activities, such as rock climbing, paraponting and downhill mountain biking developing in the area. Wooler aims to capitalise on these activities on its door step by marketing and promoting the town as a destination where all these activities can be enjoyed.</p>
<p>2. Improving gateways and signing</p>	<p>On entering Wooler it is clear that there is no sense of arrival and when driving along the A697 it is also possible to pass Wooler without even realising it. The need to create defined gateways and to improve the signage to the town is seen as an essential step in increasing visitor numbers and also in achieving some of the other priorities mentioned in this plan. Funding for two of the four main approaches to the town has already been secured and this plan suggests the need to secure funding for the remaining approaches.</p>

<p>3. Town guide, website and town trail</p>	<p>In order to achieve the priority of marketing and promoting Wooler as a hub of activity, the town guide and website need to be updated. Within the next 12 months it is feasible that the town guide and website undergo a review to ensure that they are 'selling' Wooler in the best possible way. Further to this it is suggested that the town guide is re-developed to coincide with these updates. To achieve this, a fingerpost-based history and heritage trail is suggested. Finally, this project creates scope for an associated Glendale guide/map which would help to develop linkages to other areas and activities in the region.</p>
<p>4. An independent review of the TIC</p>	<p>The question of whether or not the TIC occupies the best position at its current location has been the topic of debate in Wooler for some time. Also, with the imminent local government restructuring and the ensuing uncertain future of the role and ownership of TIC's, an independent review is considered to be a high priority. The review should aim to guide the town on the best location for the TIC as well as detail its future role in local tourism. A review would come at an important time for the town as there are currently several potential sites available, if it was considered necessary to move the TIC. Redpath's Yard, which incidentally is also a main priority of this destination plan, is a potential site which would also benefit from the outcomes of the review and having a presence of the TIC on the High Street is also an appealing idea to many consultees.</p>
<p>5. Redpath's Yard</p>	<p>Redpath's Yard is located just off the A697 at the foot of the town and is seen a crucial location for enticing visitors further up the road and into the town centre. The site is large and provides an opportunity for a development of some kind that will enhance the current tourism offer. It has been suggested that the site may be the key to linking the town with the many activities on offer in the region, developing Wooler as a 'hub of activity' and creating a presence for the National Park. Further suggestions regarding the potential use of the site include developing a tourism facility that offers a 'suite of services and activities' such as outdoor clothing and equipment outlets, cafes, restaurants and bars etc. Whatever the final decision on the use of the site may be, this study has identified the necessity for it to be recognised by regional development agencies as potentially a major economic investment project. It is suggested that ownership of the yard is achieved to ensure that future developments on the site will be tourism related.</p>
<p>6. Co-ordinating local groups</p>	<p>It is essential that in a small town such as Wooler, local groups</p>

	<p>do not operate in isolation. A structured system that leads to co-ordination of local groups would ensure plans and proposals are acted upon.</p> <p>One important group to co-ordinate with is Cycle Trax, which is supporting the creation of cycle hubs in Wooler and Haltwhistle. Currently at proposal stage, it would be essential to create links with this project which goes towards meeting some of the objectives of the Market Town Welcome programme.</p> <p>Another project to note is the Berwick Youth Project, due to run in spring 2009 which aims to set up a trainee programme for young people in outdoor activities. Looking specifically at developing leaders, this project could be essential in providing trained staff to run the outdoor activity centres that are developed / co-ordinated as a result of this study.</p> <p>It is suggested that the 'Belonging Community of Glendale Forum' should be at the forefront of any initiative that aims to co-ordinate local groups.</p>
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The destination plan identifies three timescales to which the projects have been grouped. They are quick wins, short term and medium term. Quick wins are expected to take less than 12 months to initiate, the short term is defined as a period of 1 to 2 years and finally, projects that are expected to demand a 2-3 year timescale are denoted as the medium term.

The quick win projects for Wooler focus on two main areas; improving the approaches into the town and developing or upgrading existing information sources. The town guide and website have been highlighted as areas that require particular attention and affiliation with a Glendale guide/map is suggested.

Improving the appearance of the approach into the town from the A697 is a low cost, quick win that is easily implemented and therefore gets its own mention. Collectively, the approaches to town are considered to require capital funding in order to achieve the objective of creating defined gateways and this has been specified as a key project in its own right.

The short term projects are concerned with the wider issue of marketing Wooler as a visitor destination and creating lasting links between local groups. It is also recognised that affiliation with, and a presence of, the National Park in Wooler would be beneficial towards achieving the Destination Plan's priority of marketing and promoting the town as a hub of activities. Finally, the short term presents the opportunity for Wooler to promote local food as part of a food campaign. It is expected that this will fit into a wider, regional initiative which aims to raise awareness of local food in Northumberland and the effects this has on visitor numbers.

As would be expected, the medium term presents the opportunity to develop more time sensitive and physical projects. Redpath's yard occupies a critical position at the foot of the town centre and the leadership group realises the potential of this site as a tourism draw or destination in itself. It is suggested that ownership of this site is secured to empower those people with a vested interest in

tourism and who will aim to realise the potential of the site. Having obtained ownership and planning permissions, a suite of activities at the site should be considered that provide visitors with tourist information as well as providing the goods and services needed to undertake outdoor tourism and sporting activities. Further suggestions for projects in the medium term are the co-ordinated effort required to establish Wooler as a hub of activities and an initiative to re-instate the market or co-ordinate more frequent, themed markets. The markets are expected to benefit from the food campaign by building on local produce awareness and links created.

The destination plan for Wooler puts forward an actionable document that presents the opportunity for groups of projects to work together to achieve the four main priorities. Some of the proposed projects are dependent upon or complementary to others and it is expected that in cases where there is synergy– a collaborative approach is undertaken to achieve the primary objective of fulfilling the plan’s priorities.

The following section explores the potential projects and proposals detailed above in more detail.

## **6. Programme of Actions**

### **6.1. Action Plan**

This section lists all the ideas and proposals suggested during the process or identified by the consultants, under the priority headings. The table summarises the full range of potential actions and begins to identify how we get there and who needs to be involved. With all the actions, the crucial factor is identifying which organisation is willing to take the lead and drive things forward. The final sections include a range of potential business development and support actions, plus actions required to co-ordinate between organisations across the plan. It is followed by more detailed descriptions of the top priority actions.

		Priority	Timescale	Delivery	Lead	Cost/ funding
<b>1</b>	<b>Marketing and Promoting Wooler as a hub of Activity</b>					
1.1	Co-ordinate / bring together various projects to ensure that Wooler becomes a hub of activity.	Very High	Medium Term	DP / BIO	GGT	Medium
1.2	Promote Walking and Cycling routes (as 4.2)	High	Short Term	DL / DP		
1.3	New routes for outdoor pursuits and maintenance of existing routes	High	Short Term	DL / DP		
1.4	Develop existing and new events	High	Medium Term	DL / DP		
1.5	Promote Town's history	High	Medium Term	DP		
1.6	Promote town as a green destination	High	Medium Term	DP		
1.7	Promote Adventure Sports	Medium	Medium Term	BIO		
1.8	Promote Trips	Medium	Medium Term	BIO		
1.9	Encourage live entertainment in pubs	Medium	Medium Term	DP		
<b>2</b>	<b>Improving Gateways and Signing</b>					
2.1	Link Bottom Road to High Street	Very High	Quick Win	DL	GGT & LG	Low
2.2	Invest in Gateways & signage	Very High	Quick Win	DL / DP	GGT, LG & BCC	Medium
2.3	Planters on railings from the bottom road into town	Very High	Quick Win	DL	GGT & LG	Low
<b>3</b>	<b>Town Guide, Website and Town Trails</b>					
3.1	Review and upgrade the town guide. Also update with information about the heritage of the town	Very High	Quick Win	DL	GGT & LG	Low
3.2	Update Wooler website	Very High	Quick Win	DL/DP	GGT & LG	Low
3.3	Upgrade the Town Trail	Very High	Quick Win	DL/DP	GGT & LG	Low

		Priority	Timescale	Delivery	Lead	Cost/ funding
3.4	Invest in information services	Very High	Short Term	DP		
3.5	Undertake a marketing campaign to promote Wooler as a visitor destination	High – Very High	Short Term	DP/BIO	GGT & NT	Medium – High
<b>4</b>	<b>Independent Review of the TIC</b>					
4.1	Independent Review of TIC	High	Short Term	BIO	GGT	Medium
<b>5</b>	<b>Redpath’s Yard</b>					
5.1	Develop Redpath’s Yard for use in the Tourism Industry	High – Very High	Medium Term	BIO	*Consortium	High
<b>6</b>	<b>Co-ordinating Local Groups</b>					
6.1	Develop a business forum	Very High	Quick win	DP	GGT, Business Link, NT	Low
6.2	Co-ordination of local groups	High – Very High	Short Term	DL /DP	BCGF	Low
6.3	Links to National Park	High	Short Term	DL /DP	GGT	Low
6.4	Recruit a local champion	Medium	Short Term	DL /DP		
<b>7</b>	<b>Business Developments</b>					
7.1	Encourage or invest in quality accommodation	High	Medium Term	BIO		
7.2	Encourage or invest in specialist shops	Medium	Medium Term	BIO		
<b>8</b>	<b>Environmental Schemes</b>					
8.1	Streetscape and a focal point in town	High – Very High	Medium Term	DP / BIO	GGT	Medium
8.2	Shop frontage improvements	High	Short Term	DP		
8.3	Develop a picturesque town centre	High	Medium Term	DP / BIO	GGT	Medium

		Priority	Timescale	Delivery	Lead	Cost/ funding
<b>9</b>	<b>Transport &amp; Signage</b>					
9.1	Promote Walking and Cycling Routes	High	Short Term	DL / DP	GGT & LG	Medium
9.2	Promote Arriving by Public Transport	Medium	Medium Term	BIO		
<b>10</b>	<b>Heritage and Interpretation</b>					
10.1	Develop more trails around the hinterland	High	Short Term	DL / DP	GGT & LG	Medium
10.2	Capitalise on art and culture	High	Short Term	DP		
10.3	Promote Wooler's great heritage e.g. cup and ring markings	High	Short Term	DP		
<b>11</b>	<b>Business support/training</b>					
11.1	Training for TIC staff and Accommodation staff	High	Short Term	DP / BIO		
11.2	Skills and training initiative for catering and tourism	Medium	Short Term	DP / BIO		
11.3	Extend Business Forum	Medium	Short Term	DL / DP		
11.4	Business mentoring scheme	Medium	Medium Term	DP		
<b>12</b>	<b>Food and Drink</b>					
12.1	Local food campaign	High	Short Term	DP	GGT	Medium
12.2	Re-instate the market with Local Food Links	High	Short Term - Medium Term	DP / BIO	GGT	Medium
12.3	Suggest B&Bs and hotels organise regular "local produce" meals for visitors	High	Short Term	DL		
12.4	Up-grade pubs – local food, local beers, accommodation	High	Short Term	DP / BIO		
12.5	Promotion and use of local food	High	Short Term	DP		

Timescale	
Quick win	Less than 12 months
Short Term	1 – 2 years
Medium Term	2 – 5 years
Long Term	Over 5 years

Delivery	
DL	We can deliver locally
DWP	We can deliver with partners
BIO	Business Investment Opportunity
OL	Needs outside lead

Lead	
GGT	The Glendale Gateway Trust
LG	The Leadership Group
BCC	Berwick County Council
PI	Private Investors
BCGF	Belonging Community of Glendale Forum
NT	Northumberland Tourism
*	See project detail below

## 6.2. Key Projects

The key projects have been identified for various characteristics that:

- ensure they are deliverable,
- fit within a relevant timescale and,
- that meet the objectives of the project and the vision as set out in this document.

To achieve this we have displayed the key projects under the timescales, quick win, short term, medium term and long term as follows;

### Marketing Wooler as a Hub of Activity

	<b>Co-ordinate / bring together various projects to ensure that Wooler becomes a hub of activity.</b>
Project Number	1.1
Description	<p>Many of the people present at the Market Town Welcome meetings felt strongly that Wooler’s location as the Gateway to the Cheviots and Northumberland National Park lends itself well to Wooler becoming recognised as a base for people setting off and exploring the surrounding area and taking part in some of the wide range of activities that are available.</p> <p>In order to achieve this it would be necessary for all of the individual aspects of promoting Wooler and marketing to be co-ordinated in order to achieve the over arching aim of establishing Wooler as a hub of activity. This may require all the marketing and promotion to be co-ordinated centrally to ensure conformity of information.</p>
Cost	Medium
Lead Delivery Organisation	Glendale Gateway Trust
Other Partners	Local Community Groups, One NorthEast, NSP, Northumberland Tourism
Key Issues	<p>Co-ordination of agreed schemes</p> <p>Selling the message that Wooler is a hub of activity</p>
Timetable	Medium Term – 2-5 years

## Improving Gateways and Signing

	<b>Link Bottom Road to High Street &amp; Planters on railings from the bottom road into town</b>
Project Number	2.1 & 2.3
Description	<p>It was recognised by the town that the approach from the bottom road (the A697) is a key gateway into the town centre and currently the poor appearance does not encourage visitors to venture up it.</p> <p>To overcome this, it was suggested that the bottom road should be linked to the High Street in some way. One suggestion, as a quick win, was to place planters along the railings to make the route more appealing and entice visitors up the road and into the town. Approval for this suggestion has been granted by the Parish council. Sufficient funding is required to ensure this project comes to fruition.</p>
Cost	Low
Lead Delivery Organisation	Glendale Gateway Trust, Local Community Groups, the leadership group
Other Partners	Northumberland Tourism, One NorthEast
Key Issues	<p>Securing funding for improvements</p> <p>Consultation with affected businesses / residents</p>
Timetable	Quick Win – Less than 12 months

Investing in Gateways & Signage	
Project Number	2.2
Description	<p>A project that secures capital funding to improve the entrances into Wooler is seen as a very high priority that is achievable within a relatively short period of time.</p> <p>As a result of the retail distinctiveness study in 2006, which stressed the need “to create a defined entrance on the Eastern approach”, the Glendale Gateway trust has received capital funding from NSP for two of the four entrances into the town and is currently working with an architect to develop designs.</p> <p>To ensure the success of this ongoing work, it is suggested that additional funding is secured to extend the project and develop all four entrances. It is essential that this opportunity is taken to maximise the impact on the town.</p>
Cost	Medium
Lead Delivery Organisation	Glendale Gateway Trust, the leadership group, Local Community Groups, Berwick County Council
Other Partners	Northumberland Tourism, One NorthEast, Highways Agency
Key Issues	<p>Securing funding for improvements</p> <p>Planning Permissions on the additional two entrances</p> <p>Consultation with affected businesses / residents</p>
Timetable	Quick Win – Less than 12 months

**Town Guide, Website and Town Trails**

Reviewing and upgrading the town guide and the Wooler website	
Project Number	3.1 & 3.2
Description	<p>During the planning process, reviewing and upgrading the town guide and the Wooler Website were unanimously considered to be very high priority and also a quick win.</p> <p>Within the next 12 months it is feasible that the town guide undergoes a review to ensure that it is 'selling' Wooler in the best possible way. The Wooler website should also reflect the changes in the town guide to ensure consistency. Increasingly the internet is being used as the primary information portal and it is important that the Wooler website becomes widely used to find out not only about things to do in Wooler but also as a part of the intention to make Wooler into the centre of a hub of activity. It is important that the Wooler website forms close alliance to regional sites such as the Northumberland Tourism website.</p> <p>Finally, this project creates scope for an associated Glendale guide/map which would help to develop linkages to other areas and activities in the region. It is felt that this will help to develop a strong marketing product for the area. There is also potential therefore, to align this with project 3.4 - to market Wooler as a visitor destination. Alternatively it could stand alone as a quick win that precedes the marketing campaign.</p>
Cost	Low
Lead Delivery Organisation	Glendale Gateway Trust, the leadership group
Other Partners	Northumberland Tourism, the Parish Council
Key Issues	Ensuring all promotions and marketing campaigns or materials send the same message
Timetable	Quick Win – less than 12 months

	<b>Undertake a marketing campaign to promote Wooler as a visitor destination</b>
Project Number	3.4
Description	<p>An outcome of the future visitor segmentation exercise was that Wooler needed to attract a new segment of visitors (Go for its) and in order to do so a new marketing campaign for Wooler was considered necessary to appeal to this un tapped market.</p> <p>Once again, co-ordination of tourism activities and other tourism related business is essential to ensure the success of such a campaign. It is felt that for this to have the desired impact it would need to be carried out on a relatively large scale and to do so would require full support from the local tourism industry. This campaign should be developed as an output from the newly co-ordinated local groups and needs to develop on previous projects to do with the marketing of Wooler. Collaboration with Northumberland Tourism is essential to achieve a successful marketing campaign and ensure complementarity with marketing for the wider area.</p> <p>The key to success for such a marketing campaign is that it is comprehensive enough to cover all segments of visitors, whether they are visiting Wooler for the peace and tranquillity or for the adrenalin rush.</p> <p>In order to achieve the outcomes detailed above, a marketing specialist will be required. This may be an outside agent or commissioned position specifically for this task.</p>
Cost	Medium – High
Lead Delivery Organisation	Glendale Gateway Trust & Northumberland Tourism
Other Partners	Local Community Groups
Key Issues	<p>Co-ordinating all marketing material</p> <p>Ensuring all aspects of tourism are ‘on-board’ the campaign</p> <p>Ensuring the marketing appeals to every type of target visitor</p> <p>Securing the services of a marketing specialist to lead this process</p>
Timetable	Short Term – 1-2 years

	<b>Upgrade the Town Trail</b>
Project Number	3.3
Description	<p>It is suggested that the town trail is re-developed to coincide with updates to the town guide and the website. In order to promote walking in and around the town, a trail that is signed with fingerposts which also includes history and heritage should be considered.</p> <p>This trail could be used to link areas of interest as well as providing/promoting walking and cycling routes.</p>
Cost	Medium
Lead Delivery Organisation	Glendale Gateway Trust, the leadership group
Other Partners	Northumberland Tourism, NSP, One NorthEast
Key Issues	<p>Securing funding</p> <p>Ensuring inclusion of points of interest and history, culture and heritage</p>
Timetable	Quick Win – less than 12 months

## Independent Review of the TIC

	Independent Review of the TIC
Project Number	4.1
Description	<p>Issues surrounding the TIC in Wooler have received more disagreement than any other topic discussed throughout this process. There is a clear divide between those who think the TIC should have a presence on the high street and those who believe its current location is fine.</p> <p>It is suggested therefore, that an independent review of the TIC is commissioned that deals with the issue of whether the TIC needs to be on the high street. The ownership of the TIC in light of the imminent local government re-structure should be a key focus of the study among other issues - such as the level of training TIC staff receive and the extent of services that the TIC offers.</p>
Cost	Medium
Lead Delivery Organisation	Glendale Gateway Trust
Other Partners	Northumberland Strategic Partnership, One NorthEast
Key Issues	<p>Securing funding for the independent review</p> <p>Consultation with independent organisations</p>
Timetable	Short Term – 1-2 years

## Redpath's Yard

Develop Redpath's Yard for use in the Tourism Industry	
Project Number	5.1
Description	<p>The notion that Redpath's Yard is an extremely important site in terms of attracting people into Wooler has been unquestionable throughout the Market Town Welcome process. It is also understood that a recent feasibility study identified that a wet weather activity centre on that site would be unviable. However, the importance of the site for tourism remains and it is still being considered as a potential area for a major development of some kind, that attracts by passers to stop and that also attracts new visitors to the area.</p> <p>Is it suggested that acquiring the site through a combination of private investors and public funding is considered. Having established ownership of the site, alternative options regarding its use, which offer the greatest benefit to the town and the local tourism industry can be acted upon.</p> <p>Options for the site include developing a suite of functions rather than one activity centre. Considerations should include: cafés / restaurants, music, arts, history and culture, the presence of the National Park, outdoor activities shops and services at the site etc.</p> <p>It is essential that this site is recognised by Regional Development Agencies as a potential major economic investment project. The opportunities that the site presents to the tourism industry at a local and regional level needs to be acknowledged and more importantly, needs to be actioned.</p>
Cost	High
Lead Delivery Organisation	Consortium of local groups to include; Glendale Gateway Trust, private investors, the leadership group and the local council.
Other Partners	Local Community Groups, One NorthEast, NSP, Northumberland Tourism
Key Issues	<p>Attracting private investment and or Funding</p> <p>Land ownership</p> <p>Planning permission</p> <p>Maintaining linkage of Redpath's yard to the town</p> <p>Consultation with independent organisations</p>
Timetable	Medium Term – 2-5 years

## Co-ordinating Local Groups

	Develop a Business Forum
Project Number	6.1
Description	<p>A business forum for the Glendale area will empower local businesses and afford greater influence towards local policies and decisions affecting the business community. At present there is a Wooler Traders association which consists primarily of retailers. It is suggested that the scope is widened to include all businesses in the area such as accommodation, food and drink, visitor attractions and other tourism related organisations. A business forum would be expected to take a lead on some of the projects detailed in this plan along with the Glendale Gateway Trust. It is expected that Business Link will forge a close association with the forum and there is also an opportunity for regional chambers of commerce and National Park Community Enterprise Officers to sit on the forum.</p> <p>As a next step, and to initiate the forum, it is suggested that the Glendale Gateway Trust organise meetings with interested parties. Northumberland Tourism would be expected to support the development of the business forum at this stage.</p>
Cost	Low
Lead Delivery Organisation	Glendale Gateway Trust, the leadership group, Business Link
Other Partners	Northumberland Tourism
Key Issues	Ensuring wide participation Management
Timetable	Quick Win – less than 12 months

	<b>Co-ordination of Local Groups</b>
Project Number	6.2
Description	<p>It is essential that in a small town such as Wooler, local groups do not operate in isolation. A structured system that leads to co-ordination of local groups would ensure plans and proposals are acted upon.</p> <p>One important group to co-ordinate with is Cycle Trax which is leading the work on the creation of cycle hubs in Wooler and Haltwhistle. Currently at proposal stage, it would be essential to create links with this project which goes towards meeting some of the objectives of the Market Town Welcome programme.</p> <p>Another project to note is the Berwick Youth Project, due to run in spring 2009 which aims to set up a trainee programme for young people in outdoor activities. Looking specifically at developing leaders, this project could be essential in providing trained staff to run the outdoor activity centres that are developed / co-ordinated as a result of this study.</p> <p>It is suggested that the 'Belonging Community of Glendale Forum' should be at the forefront of any initiative that aims to co-ordinate local groups.</p>
Cost	Low
Lead Delivery Organisation	Belonging Community of Glendale Forum
Other Partners	Local Community Groups
Key Issues	Creating a lasting relationship
Timetable	Short Term – 1-2 years

Develop and Create Links between Wooler and the National Park	
Project Number	6.3
Description	<p>One of the key points coming out of the study is that Wooler aims to become a centre for visitors to use a base for exploring a wide variety of places around the area. Creating links with the National Park is seen as a way of achieving this.</p> <p>It is also recognised that there is soon to be a National Park Review and consultation and that if Wooler is to capitalise on this opportunity to create links with the national park, measures need to be taken immediately.</p>
Cost	Low
Lead Delivery Organisation	Glendale Gateway Trust
Other Partners	Northumberland National Park
Key Issues	Creating a lasting relationship that benefits both the National Park and Wooler
Timetable	Short Term – 1-2 years

## Environmental Schemes

	<b>Improve the streetscape to make the High Street picturesque and develop a focal point in the town</b>
Project Number	8.1 & 8.3
Description	<p>Improving the appearance of the Town centre was considered a high priority as was creating some sort of focal point that detracts from the unattractive linear street that Wooler currently suffers with.</p> <p>Previous suggestions regarding this aspect of the town include the retail distinctiveness study actions to remodel the market place, relocate the bus station and coach parking, articulate the street with co-ordinated hanging signs and promote local stone copings for low wall boundary details.</p> <p>An independent review into the feasibility of some of these suggestions or into the viability of potential a focal point should be considered. In addition, alliance with the shop frontage improvement grant is essential.</p>
Cost	Medium
Lead Delivery Organisation	Glendale Gateway Trust
Other Partners	Local Community Groups, private investors One NorthEast, NSP, Northumberland Tourism
Key Issues	<p>Attracting Funding</p> <p>Co-ordination of agreed schemes</p> <p>Planning</p> <p>Combining with existing shop frontage improvement schemes</p> <p>Consultation with independent organisations</p>
Timetable	Medium Term – 2-5 years

## Food and Drink

	Local Food Campaign
Project Number	12.1
Description	<p>The retail distinctiveness study highlighted three actions that were concerned with promoting a farmers' market in Wooler:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To explore the feasibility of using a Glendale Gateway Trust owned building for a Farmers' market express</li> <li>2. To develop a marketing campaign for a farmers' market</li> <li>3. To develop a network of farmers' markets in the region</li> </ol> <p>This study has also identified the need for local produce to be promoted and a suggested action is to facilitate a local food campaign that will not only achieve the above objectives but will also co-ordinate local food to other areas of the local tourism industry.</p> <p>It is expected that the marketing campaign mentioned above will consider the requirements of promoting local food in the area in a collaborative process that makes best use of resources. Collaboration with Northumbria Larder should be considered.</p> <p>In addition, regional food initiatives should be closely tied into any actions within the town.</p>
Cost	Medium
Lead Delivery Organisation	Glendale Gateway Trust
Other Partners	Local Community Groups, Northumbria Larder
Key Issues	<p>Combining the promotion of local food with other tourism marketing</p> <p>Developing links with regional initiatives</p>
Timetable	Short Term – 1-2 years

	Re-instate the Market with Local Food Links
Project Number	12.2
Description	Re-instating the market was seen as a high priority and creating links with local food was considered to go hand in hand with this. It would be expected that the food campaign lends itself to culminate in a sustainable market that continues to sell local produce.
Cost	Medium
Lead Delivery Organisation	Glendale Gateway Trust
Other Partners	Local Community Groups, private investors One NorthEast, NSP, Northumberland Tourism
Key Issues	Establishing a suitable location for the market Developing the local food campaign
Timetable	Medium Term – 2-5 years

### 6.3. Cross County Projects

As the Destination Plans developed it was clear that there were many common themes between the emerging priorities in each town. The same issues cropped up in many towns and opportunities for joint working to address many of these emerged. So for example while a particular town may want to improve a local walking route there will also be scope to link it into a wider network and to undertake a joint promotion to walkers.

The themes where there is potential for joined up action across the towns are:

- Outdoor activities - walking/cycling, watersports, nature based tourism
- History and heritage
- Food and drink
- Art, culture and events
- Business support and training
- Planning, infrastructure and destination management
- Promotion of investment opportunities

The advent of a new unitary authority opens up opportunities to develop broader approaches to issues such as car parking, promoting investment opportunities and promoting public transport. There may be scope for county based initiative for developing volunteer capacity in events organisation. There is definitely demand for workshops and training for the tourism sector which could be organised across the county and help businesses network.

The partner organisations need to maintain close links with Northumberland Strategic Partnership, Northumberland Tourism and One North East to ensure they can take part in and capitalise upon

any collaborative projects. They should also agitate for projects which help them better deliver this action plan.

## Appendices

**1. Appendix 1 – Individuals who have contributed to the development of this plan**

Tom	Johnston	Glendale Gateway Trust
Neil	Wilson	Glendale Gateway Trust
Anne	Park	The Tankerville Arms Hotel
Neil	Brown	Berwick County Council
Robert	Tait	Highburn House Caravan Park
David	Girdwood	The Good Life Shop
Tracey	Gillies	Private Business
Ollie	Jay	Ford & Etal estates
Hugh	Logan	Fenton Hill
Margaret	Logan	Fenton Hill
Beth	Mills	Firwood House
Mike	Mills	Firwood House
Iain	Hedley	Northumberland National Park Authority
John	Magleave	The Black Bull Hotel
Alison	Wright	Private Business
Pauline	Aitchison	Breeze Café / Shop
Alison	Hilton	Wooler Golf Club
Ted	Liddle	Cycle Trax
Tom	Armstrong	Rendezvous Café
Roger	Miket	Private Business

## 2. Appendix 2 – Segmentation

Below is a full description for each of the bespoke segmentation groups that were used for this study in Wooler.

### 2.1. Explorers

This segment consists of people that are visiting North East England to explore the region and visit the heritage attractions on offer. This group are new to the area, being influenced by a destination they have not visited before and wanting to experience something new.

They are the oldest segment with the highest proportion of over 55s (30%) and are most likely to be travelling as a couple. Although only accounting for 2.4% of this segment, those travelling as part of an organised tour are higher than the average (1.6%).

They are more likely to be staying in guest houses or B&Bs compared to other visitor groups and the 'Traditional' ArkLeisure segment is most likely to be found in this group, highlighting the slower speed of holiday and desire for accommodation offering the personal service they desire.

They are more likely to be found in Northumberland and County Durham.

A greater proportion of visitors from this segment come from the North West of England and the South East of England.

They spend a significant amount on accommodation but compared to a number of the other segments they do not spend a significant amount on other elements of their holiday.

### 2.2. Creatures of Habit

This segment is somewhat similar to the explorers but differ in the fact that they are choosing North East England because it is a familiar location to them. They are doing similar activities in terms of exploring the towns and the countryside as well as visiting historical and heritage attractions but are looking to slow down and rejuvenate themselves.

This segment is, again, slightly older with a higher propensity for being above 45 years and in terms of life stage they are more likely to be in the older family or old with no children.

Short breaks are the most common but this segment has a higher propensity to be staying for more than 7 nights and be staying in self catering or camping accommodation.

Traditionals and Functionals have a higher propensity to be in this segment compared to other segments.

Other than the Family Eventers, this is the lowest spending segment.

### 2.3. Family Sightseers

This segment consists mainly of families that are spending quality time together going round the family and heritage attractions in the region.

As this segment is largely made up of families, they are most likely to be between 25 and 44 years of age.

They are most likely to be staying between 4 and 7 nights, although they are more likely than a number of other segments to be staying for more than 8 nights.

Although the majority stay in commercial accommodation, which is most likely to be self catering, there are just over a third staying in free accommodation. This segment is likely to choose budget accommodation.

They are also more likely to be found in rural sub regions (Northumberland and County Durham), which is where these types of accommodation are more likely to be found.

They are likely to be touring around the region a bit, but it is likely to be to get to the main attractions.

#### **2.4. Rural Hikers**

This segment is choosing North East England for the countryside and the scenery, but more so for the activities they can do in the countryside like serious walking. They are choosing North East England because it is somewhere new for them.

They are there to rejuvenate and to slow down, but this is more likely from their everyday routine, due to the fact that they are participating in serious walking whilst on their trip.

This segment tends to be slightly older than the average visitor, favouring the over 45s and is most likely to be travelling as a couple.

Although short breaks account for the majority of trips among this segment, trips of 7 nights are higher among this segment compared to many of the others.

They tend to favour the types of accommodation that are available in the rural areas namely guest houses or camping and caravanning and hence are more likely to be found in Northumberland.

Accommodation and food and drink account for the majority of this segments spending but due to the fact that they are spending much of their time walking in the countryside they are a low spending segment.

#### **2.5. Go for its**

This is a very active segment that seems willing to give many things a try. They are a young segment with a male bias and are most likely to be travelling in an adult only group.

They are interested in the countryside and the scenery where they undertake their activities, which include sporting activities and serious walking.

They are not interested in "roughing it", as most are choosing to stay in hotels or guest houses and B&Bs.

Short breaks are the most common duration but this segment is more likely than average to spend between 4 and 6 nights in North East England.

They are also most likely to be influenced by the type of holiday and less by the destination, which is important for marketing to this segment. They should be sold on experiences rather than places.

They are a strongly Cosmopolitan group which fits in with the active and risk taking nature of the Cosmopolitan segment from the ArkLeisure segmentation.

The length of trip does not seem to affect their behaviour as this segment is very active regardless of whether they are in the North East for less than 3 nights or more than 7.

This segment is staying in locations where there is nightlife to keep them active in the evenings.

This is the highest spending segment of all the visitor segments.

### 3. Appendix 3 – Town Audit

#### 3.1. Accommodation

Please collect numbers of each type of accommodation. For smaller towns you may want to list all accommodation businesses individually.

	Number	No. of bedspaces, units or pitches	Number officially quality inspected
Hotels	3	76 bedspaces	3
Guesthouses/B&Bs	7	33 bedspaces	6
Inns or pubs with accommodation	3		
Self-Catering businesses	4	4 units	4
Caravan & Camping sites	2	180 pitches	
Youth or other hostels	3?		
Other group accommodation			

Are there any particular gaps in the type or quality of accommodation for the size of your town?

#### 3.2. Attractions

Please include all sites which would be of interest to visitors, adding additional rows as necessary

	Names	Opening days/months	Your quality score*
Historic houses, castles	Chillingham castle		4
	Lady Waterford hall		3
	Ford castle		4
	Etal castle		3
Hill Forts	Humbleton		4

	Yeavinger Bell		3
	Kirknewton		2
	Doddington		2
	Kettles		2
	Old Bewick		3
	Breamish valley		5
Museums, heritage centres	Heatherslaw mill		4
	Ingram visitor centre		4
	Fenton centre		4
Ancient sites	Maelmin		4
	Gefrin		3
	Flodden field trail		4
	Ingram valley		4
	Duddo stone circle		2
Cultural sites	Pin well		2
Bridges, Viaducts	Weetwood		4
	Fowberry		4
Churches of interest to visitors	Chillingham		4
	Branxton		3
	Kirknewton		4
Animal/wildlife attractions inc. nature reserves	Birds of prey centre		5
	Chillingham Cattle		3
	Ford Moss		2
Farm attractions	Fenton Centre		4
Gardens	Branxton		3

Railway, transport attractions	Heatherslaw railway		4
Country parks, woodlands, special countryside sites	National Park		4
	College Valley		3
	St Cuthbert's cave		3
	Kyloe woods		2
	Hepburn woods		3
	Wooler common		4
	Tillside (Etal)		3
	Langleeford valley		3
	Ingram valley		4
Battlefields	Flodden		4
	Hedgley moor		2
	Homildon hill		2
View points	Ross castle		2
	Yeavinger bell		2
	Cheviot		4
	Dodd Law (golf club)		2
Cup & ring markings	Routin Linn		2
	Doddington		2
	Chatton Park		2
	Weetwood Moor		2
World War II sites	Milfield airfield		1
	Crash sites		2

\* Also mark any which have an official quality grading from the Visitor Attraction Quality Scheme

## Festivals and Events

List regular or annual festivals and events which will be of interest to visitors, in calendar order, using extra lines if necessary.

Date	Event	Details
July	Glendale Festival	
July	Chevy Chase	
August	Flodden ride outs	
August	Carnival	
August	Glendale Show	
August	Cheviot Challenge	
August	Powburn Show	
September	Ingram Show?	
	Steam Rally	
	National Park activity days	
	Forestry Commission activity days	
	Dog trials (Kirknewton)	
	College valley show?	
	Ford & Etal	
	Fenton centre	

**Are there any gaps, for example at particular times of the year?**

very little in the winter

**Does the range of events match the types of interests that visitors have?**

### 3.3. Retail

Those towns which took part in the Retail Distinctiveness Programme will be able to use that information to complete this sheet. Note only those shops which will be of particular interest to visitors. In smaller towns that is likely to include food shops, but in larger towns focus on speciality shopping rather than the whole retail sector.

#### Shops

Retail type	No. of shops	Names (omit if too many to list)
Speciality Food	7	Trotter Family Bakers The home Bakery Farm to Freeze Johnson Butchers The Good Life Shop Doddington ice cream Heatherslaw mill
Antiques	3	Hamish Dunn Antiques Miller Antiques Border antiques Glendale gallery
Books	2	C4C Hamish Dunn Ford village?
Arts / Crafts	3	The Glendale Gallery Jasons

		Breeze
Gift	5	Everything and Anything The Flower Basket The Cuddy Duck Brand Greetings from Wooler
Outdoor/Leisure	1	Gear for Girls
Clothing		
Garden centres/ nurseries	1	Homecare
Other Speciality or 'destination' shops		

**Markets**

Market type	name	regularity	day(s) of week	5	4	3	2	1
Outdoor								
Indoor								
Speciality								

**Eating out**

No.	Names
	(omit if too many to list)

Restaurants	4	Milan Restaurant Tankerville Arms Ryecroft hotel Harvey's
Take-aways	3	Oriental Kitchens Sandwich Bar Foulis Fish Restaurant
Cafes/tea shops	6	Market Place Café Milfield Country Café Café Espresso Café Terrace Breeze Rendezvous Cafe
Pubs serving food	4	The Angel Inn The Black Bull Wheatsheaf Hotel The Red Lion Inn
Other		
How many vacant shops are there in the town currently?		
What Percentage of shops are open on Sundays?		
What Percentage of eating places are open on Sundays?		
What Percentage of shops are open in the early evening 5pm-7pm?		
What Percentage of eating places are open in the early evening?		

What Percentage of shops observe a half day closing?
Which day of the week?

Are there any particular gaps in the retail and catering offer of your town for a town of its size?
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### 3.4. Sports, outdoor activity and entertainment facilities

Please note all facilities which are available for visitors (i.e. not private clubs etc). Add extra rows as necessary.

Facility	Name	Brief details	Quality grading				
			5	4	3	2	1
Leisure centre/ gym	Riverside caravan park Akeld?	Private club, day membership available to non residents of park					
Swimming pool	Middle School Riverside caravan park Akeld	Used only for school use Private club, see above					
Golf	Wooler golf club	9 hole moorland course, clubhouse, changing rooms, electric buggies available					
Long distance footpaths	St Cuthberts way Pennine Way Ravenber way						
Other named walks	Wooler common all ability trail						

	Hillforts heritage trail Flodden field trail						
Bicycle hire	Haugh Head garage Heatherslaw mill						
Cycle routes	Pennine cycle way						
Riding/pony trekking	Kimmerston						
Special riding routes	Cheviot hills Border country ride	Not waymarked waymarked					
Fishing	Till, Glen, <u>Wooler water</u> , <u>Breamish</u> fly & course Powburn gravel pits Lowick pond?	Tickets available from various post offices					
Sailing							
Canoeing	Till, Ford castle activity centre	Used mainly by this provider.					
Other outdoor activities, sports	Climbing, Bowden doors Kylloe woods Downhill biking, Wooler common (2 routes) 4 cross track	No facilities  Local club facility on Forest Enterprise land  Local club facility,					

	(quarry)	membership available from Bike hire centre					
	Wooler ski club	3 tows, floodlit, when the snow falls					
	Wooler tennis club	Two courts, hire charge for use					
	Skatepark	Scott park					
	Clay shooting	Fowberry Farm					
	Wooler bowls club	Day fee, equipment hire available					
	Shooting, pheasant, grouse, deer	Local estates					
	Borders gliding club	Visitors welcome, weekends and summer weekdays.					
	Mountain biking	Various cross country rides, bridle paths and green lanes					
	Cycling	Low traffic level country lanes					
Theatre	Local halls activities?						
Cinema*	Film nights	Cannot advertise details					
Other entertainment facilities	Halls have bands and stuff Quiz night in pubs						

\* include regular film showing arrangements if appropriate

**Are there any particular gaps or weaknesses for a town of its size?**

Wet weather provision

**3.5. Support facilities and infrastructure**

**Car parking**

	<b>Free</b>	<b>Short stay</b>	<b>Long stay</b>
No. of car parks	3		1
No. of spaces in total	66 (5 disabled)		14 (2 disabled)
	<b>Free</b>	<b>Metered</b>	
On street parking places (approx)	60 High St		

**Coach Parking**

	Location	capacity
Location(s) for dropping off passengers	Bus station	4
Location(s) for coach parking	High Street	No designated areas
Estimated no. of coaches visiting the town each week?		

<p>Any related issues?</p> <p>Library car park not used, only 12 hrs per week</p> <p>High Street</p>
--

**Other transport facilities**

No's and locations of bicycle racks/storage	<p>6 Cheviot Centre, racks</p> <p>2 Bus Station, racks</p> <p>6 Bus Station, storage</p> <p>YHA, storage</p>
Location of central bus station/shelter	High St
Facilities available at bus station/shelter	Toilets, BIKE STORAGE, 2 TIP'S, BENCHES
No. of daily buses linking to other towns	<p>12 Alnwick, on-wards connection to Newcastle</p> <p>3 Kelso, a week</p> <p>10 Berwick upon Tweed</p>
Distance from town centre to nearest railway station	16 Berwick upon Tweed

**Public toilets**

Toilet location	Bus Station	Scott Park?	
Opening hours	?		
free/paid	Free		
disabled access yes/no	Yes		
baby changing yes/no	?		

Are there any particular weaknesses or gaps for a town of its size?

### 3.6. Visitor Information Centre

Visitor / Tourist Information Centres (VICs/TICs) are the public face of tourism. They provide a vital role both in the planning of visits to the destination and influencing activity once the visitor has arrived, thus encouraging longer stays and increased spend. They also play an important role in providing an information service to residents and hence support the key Visiting Friends and Relatives (VFR) market.

Does your town have a VIC/ TIC?	yes	If not, where is your nearest centre?	
Location	Cheviot Centre	Contact Name	Linda Witsun
Telephone Number		Email Address	

For those towns with a VIC/TIC, please compile the most recent figures available

Enquiry type:	Total Number of Enquiries		
	2005	2006	2007
Counter			
Postal			
Telephone			
Email			
Accommodation bookings			

Please estimate proportions of enquiries from each of:

	%
Local residents	
UK visitors	
Overseas visitors	

### Visitor Information Needs

What are the most frequent information requests that you receive from visitors and potential visitors?	
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	

Are there gaps in the current information available to meet these requests? If so, what further types of information would be useful?
---

How well does the town meet the needs and expectations of visitors and what improvements are
--

needed to better meet their requirements?

### 3.7. Tourist Information Points (TIPs)

TIPs are the notice or information boards which provide useful information for visitors such as a map of where they are and things to see and do. They are often located in car parks, town centres or key sites. Please survey and include details of those in your town, using additional columns if necessary.

Number in town:

3

Locations	Padgepool Place	Bus Station	Bus Station 2
Content of each e.g. maps, adverts, events	Map, local information	Bus & cycle route map, bus timetables	Local history & info, local map
Is it well maintained?	yes	No, sun bleached main cycling map	yes
Who is responsible for maintenance?			
Is the content appropriate and up to date?	yes	yes	yes
Are there any additional locations where a TIP is needed?			

### 3.8. Interpretation

Interpretative materials play a key role in providing visitors with in depth information about a town or destination – beyond basic directions and information, they tell the story of a destination, informing visitors about its history and points of interest. Interpretative materials can vary tremendously - we suggest you focus on interpretative boards/panels, wall plaques, tours/signed trails, and guided tours.

<b>Is there any interpretation around the town?</b>	<b>Details</b>
Boards or panels at key sites or on key buildings of interest	
Plaques on specific buildings	
Signed tours or trails around the town	
Regular guided tours around the town	
Other interpretation materials	

Who is responsible for maintenance of panels, plaques and signs?
Are there any gaps where further / new interpretative materials could be provided?

### 3.9. Visitor Pedestrian Signposting

Pedestrian signposting, usually in the form of finger posts, plays an important role in ensuring that visitors to a town centre are able to orientate themselves effectively and find their way about. Looking at every individual finger post in larger towns is potentially a complicated and time consuming task - for the audit in this case we suggest the following approach;

- Choose a maximum of four locations (and the subsequent walking route to the town centre) which are key entry points/points of arrival for visitors – i.e. the main visitor car parks, bus/railway station/ dropping off point - and assess the following points
- In smaller towns where there are fewer than four fingerposts simply assess each in turn.

	<b>Location 1</b>	<b>Location 2</b>	<b>Location 3</b>	<b>Location 4</b>
<b>Location or start point</b>	<b>Bus Station</b>	<b>Padgepool</b>		

		Place		
Is there a TIP showing where you are in relation to the town centre?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Signs to the Tourist / Visitor Information Centre?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Signs to public toilets?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Signs to main visitor attraction(s)	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Is there good continuity of signposts/fingerposts along the route?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

**Quality of Signing**

Are routes clear?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Are fingerposts obscured or pointing the wrong way?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Are fingerposts well maintained?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Are there any obvious gaps in terms of facilities which are not currently signed?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

### 3.10. Road signposting for visitors

Feedback from visitors suggests that visitor signposting is consistently identified as something destinations could improve. More often than not, when a first time visitor travels to a destination, advance signposting will be their first experience of the destination – so it is important to make a good first impression. Visitors particularly value brown and white visitor signing which is easy to recognise and is designed specifically for their purposes.

Perhaps more so than the previous areas of the information audit, assessing road signposting to a destination is a complex area to consider – encompassing a range of logistical, technical and road safety and highway management issues. In practical terms, the most important areas to consider are the main road routes into the market towns

- Choose a maximum of four main road routes into the market towns (if there are fewer than 4 main routes, only assess those that are appropriate), starting from the nearest strategic road or junction.
- In larger towns these routes will be assessed by travelling along the route in a car, two people are required to carry out this aspect of the audit. Drive along the route from your chosen starting point, noting details on the issues set out in the template. **Safety warning - only carry out this survey at a quite time and in good weather. Plan your route and stops in advance. Drive carefully and be aware of traffic behind you. If any routes are hazardous for this type of survey do not undertake it yourselves but discuss signage with your highways authority.**
- In smaller towns it may possible to complete this survey on foot - **Safety warning - again consider safety issues carefully before surveying along busy roads on foot, particularly if there is no pavement. Be especially careful if taking photographs.**

	Route 1	Route 2	Route 3	Route 4
<b>starting point</b>	A697(from South)	A697(from North)	B6525	B6348
<b>finishing point</b>	TC	TC	TC	TC
Are there any signs on the route indicating that this is a market town of interest to visitors?  <i>(this could include white on brown tourist signs, welcome signing etc)</i>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

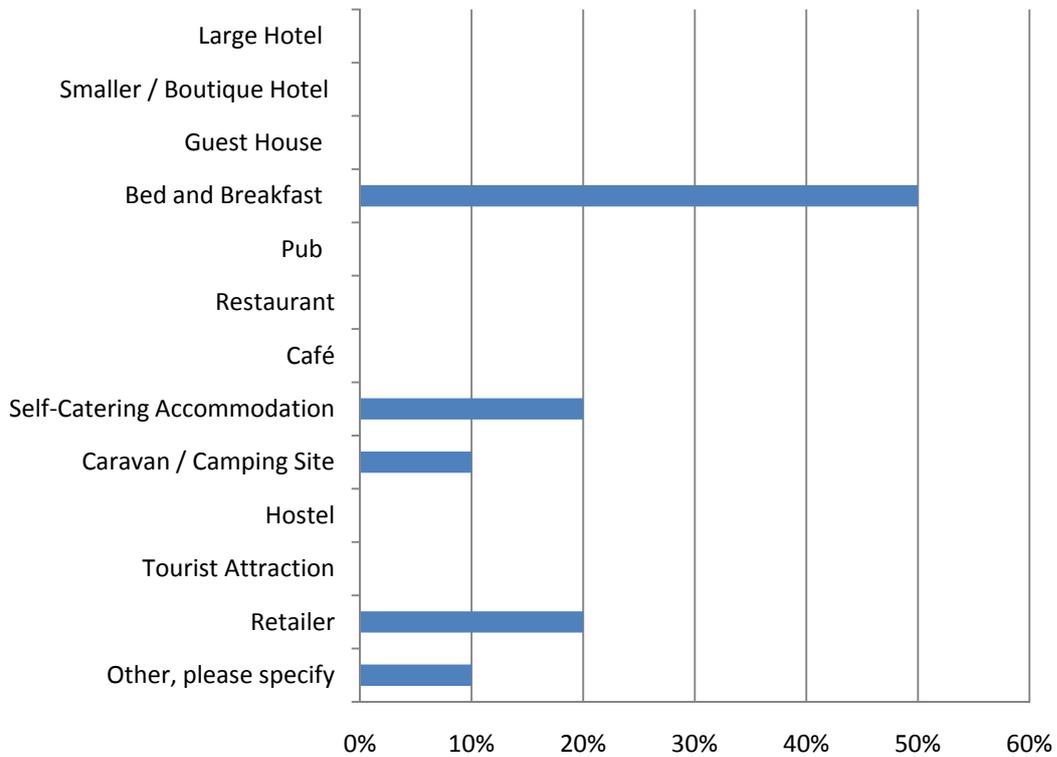
Are there any white on brown tourist signs?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
<i>- Record any details / location</i> Pottery signs?	Only hostel sign, none from North		At junction with A697, no road signs or tourist signs	
Signposting to the Tourist Information Centre	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>			
<i>- Record any details / location</i>				
Signposting for main attractions?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>			
<i>- Record any details / location</i>				
Signposting for visitor car parks? But not for all car parks, designation?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>			
<i>- Record any details / location</i>				
Signposting for public toilets?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>			
<i>- Record any details / location</i> Only once in the town				
Is there an out-of-town Tourist Information Point on the main road before entering/ turning off to the town?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			

- Record any details / location				
<b>Continuity of signposting</b>				
Where facilities are signposted, does this remain consistent along the routes?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>			
<b>Quality of signing.</b>				
Are the signs appropriately maintained	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>			
Visually- are they clear/obscured	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>			
Are there any out of date signs which need to be removed or rationalised	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			
Note details for reporting to Highway authority				

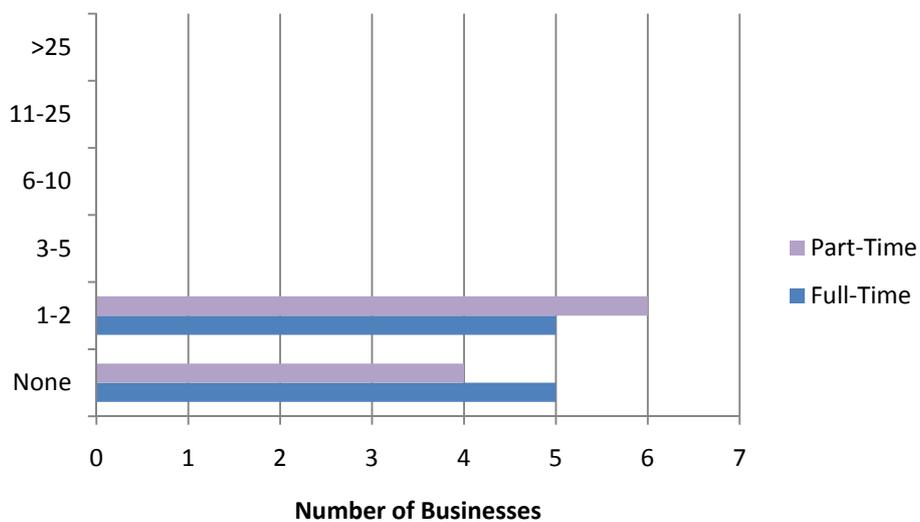
**4. Appendix 4 – Business Survey**

10 businesses responded to the survey in Wooler. The following graphs detail the main results:

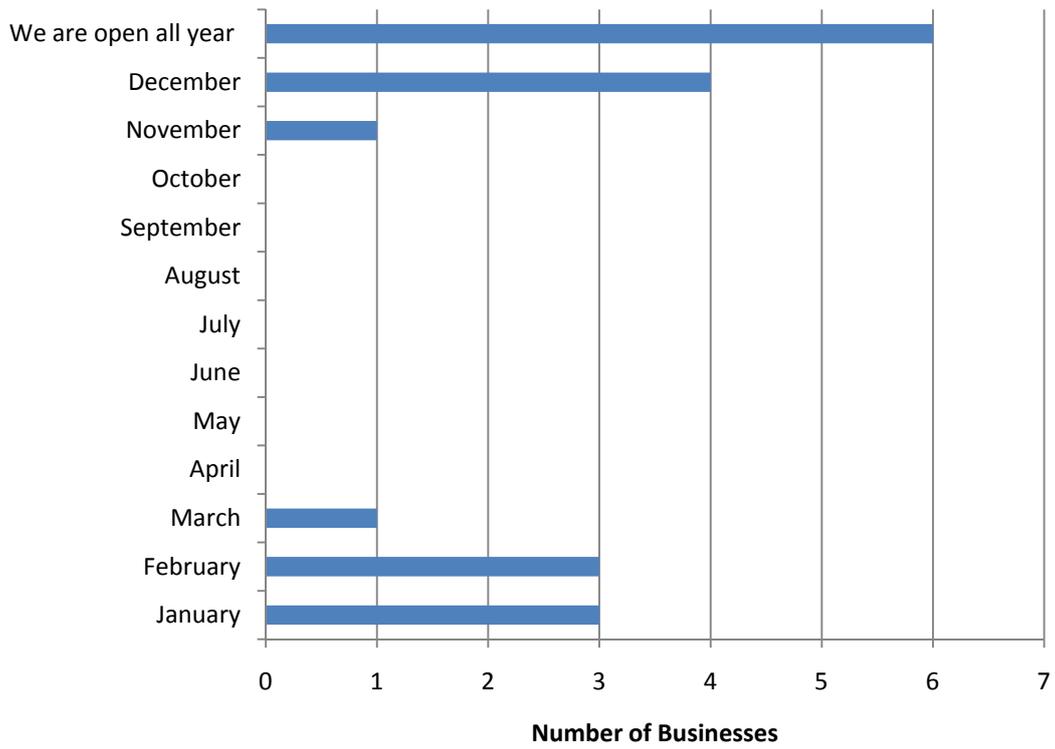
**Type of Tourism Business – Respondents**



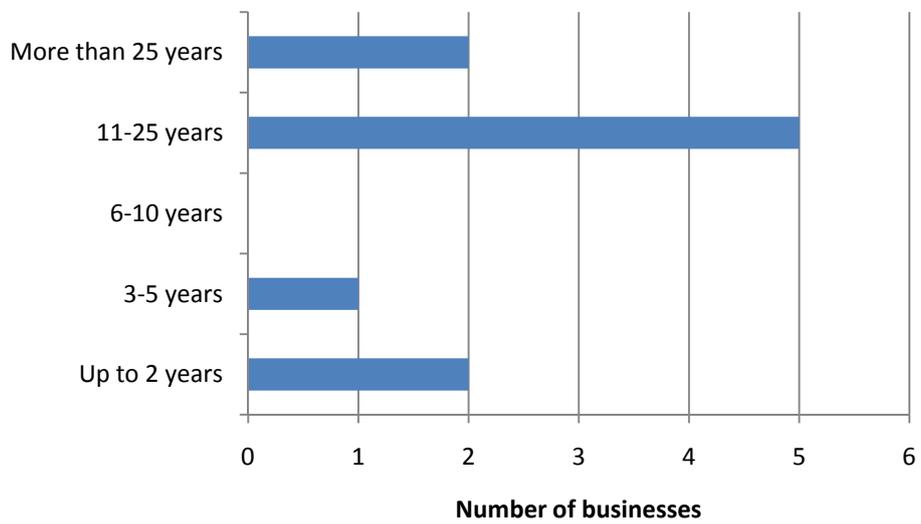
**How many staff do you employ on average?**



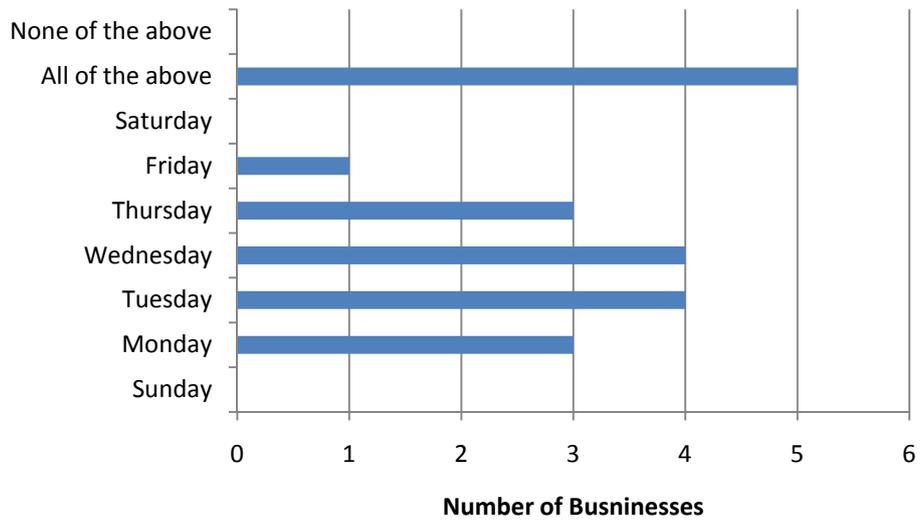
### Which months of the year are you closed?



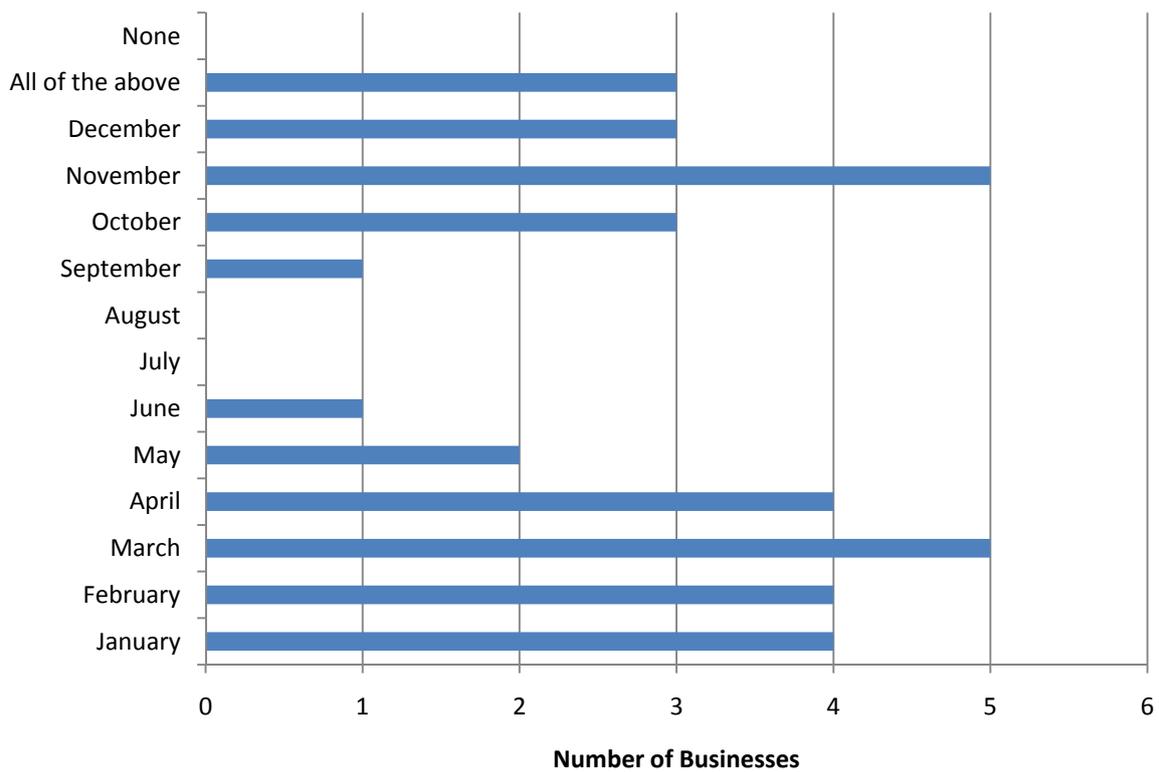
### For how many years have you operated this business?



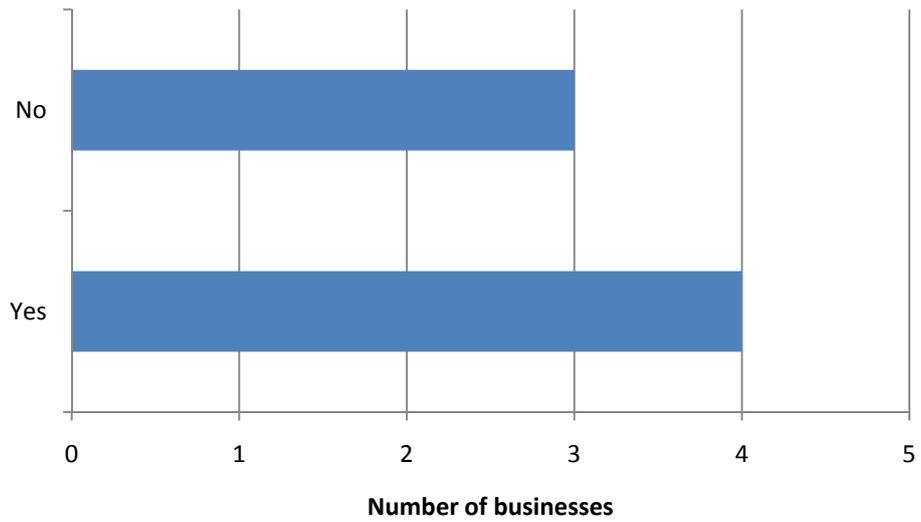
**Are there any particular times of the week that you would like to see an increase in your business?**



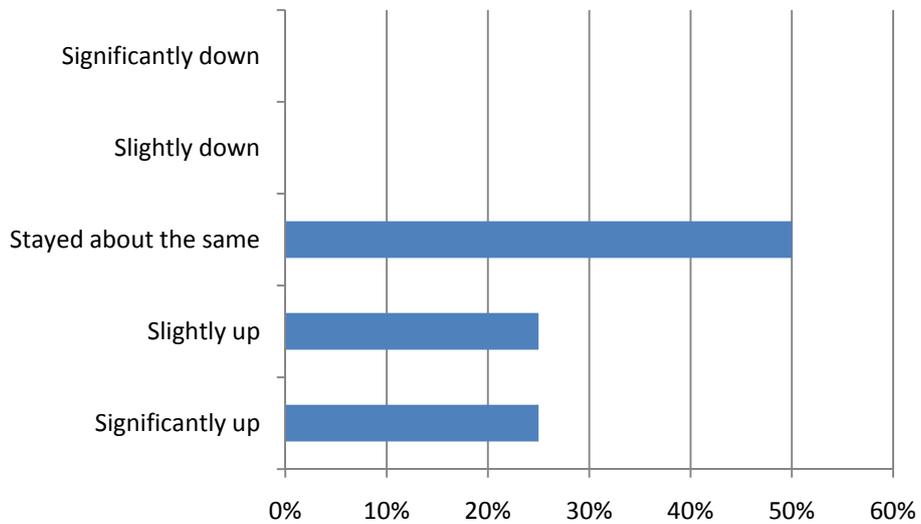
**Which months would you like to see an increase in your business?**



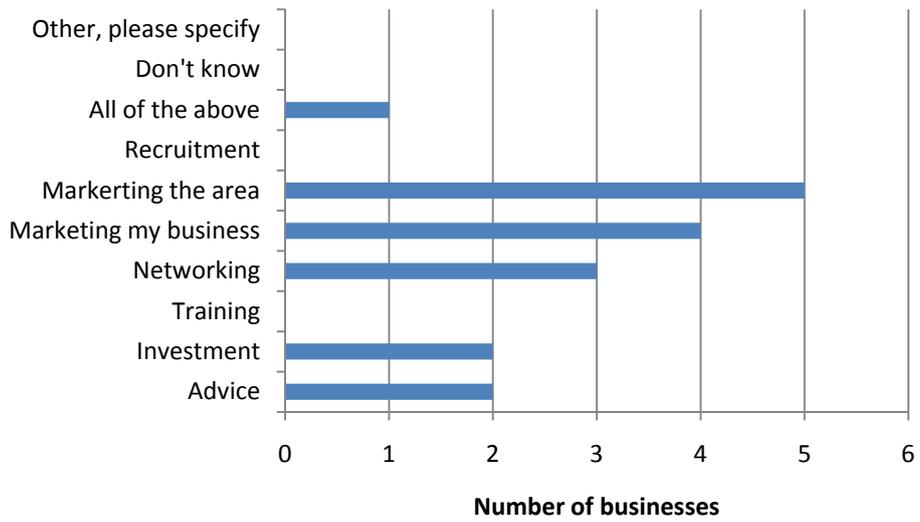
**Do you have any expansion development plans for your business?**



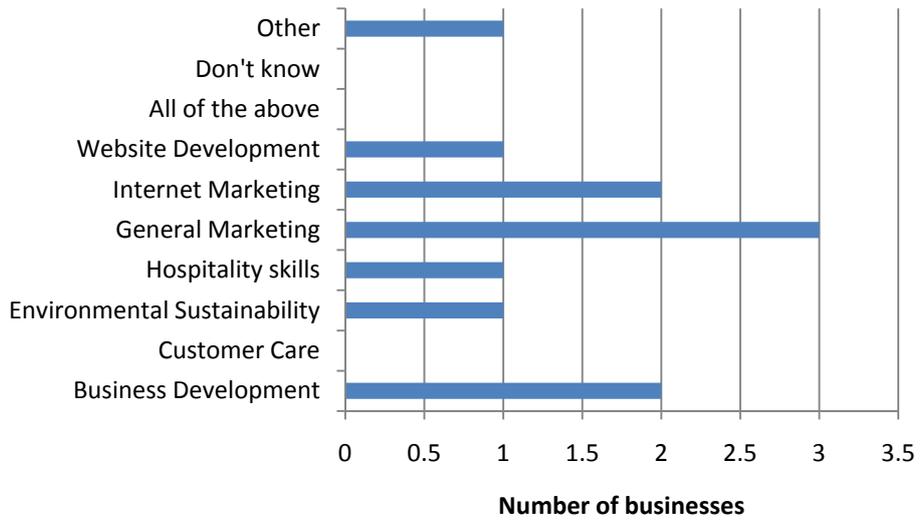
**What has been the trend in you profitability in the past three years?**



**What support from local authorities, tourism bodies or other organisations would be of greatest benefit to you in the development of your business?**



**Are there any specific training needs that would benefit your business, your staff or other operators in the wider area?**



5. Appendix 5 – Spend Ranking by Segmentation

**Table 23: Ranking of target groups**

	All segments	Eventers/ occasionalers	Family sightseers	Go for its	Party People	Explorers	Rural Hikers	Creatures of Habit
Avg spend per person per day	£74.83	£71.34	£46.41	£95.79	£77.99	£87.27	£68.46	£67.85
Rank		4	7	1	3	2	5	6
Avg Spend per stay per person	£262.65	£187.62	£214.88	£493.32	£189.52	£284.50	£254.67	£271.40
Rank		7	5	1	6	2	4	3
Avg Spend per stay per group	£874.64	£557.24	£887.45	£1,677.28	£803.55	£776.69	£758.92	£768.06
Rank		7	2	1	3	4	6	5
3 year value	£1,827.99	£1,209.22	£1,490.91	£7,497.45	£1,735.66	£916.49	£979.01	£1,520.76
Rank		5	4	1	2	7	6	3
Volume		26%	6%	12%	10%	16%	16%	14%
Rank		1	7	5	6	3	2	4
% Touring a lot	28%	23%	25%	41%	10%	33%	31%	28%
Rank		6	5	1	7	2	3	4

6. Appendix 6 - Visitor Vision Exercise

	Explorers	Go for its	Creatures of habit
What are you looking for from your short break?	<p>Quality accommodation – en-suite</p> <p>Good signage</p> <p>Quality, straight forward information</p> <p>Good food</p> <p>Good transport</p> <p>Pleasant surroundings,</p> <p>Attractions in the town</p>	<p>Adrenalin Sports</p> <p>e.g. Gliding, Mountain biking, climbing, parapointing, running, walking, canoeing,</p> <p>Beer!!!</p>	<p>Familiarity, nice surroundings.</p> <p>To return to familiar locations</p> <p>Re-forge links with the people / places they have met</p> <p>Security and improvement within traditional agricultural cheviot community</p> <p>Friendly people</p> <p>A place to go with like minded people and friends and stay out</p>
Where in/around the town will you stay, eat and drink?	<p>B&amp;b's, hotels, caravan sites,</p> <p>Up market bar meals, restaurants, hotels</p>	<p>Within 2 miles of town, accommodation will need facilities such as Drying, packed meals, transport to town.</p> <p>Youth Hostel</p> <p>Impatient group want everything and they want it now!</p>	<p>Fenton hall</p> <p>Farm cottages</p> <p>Tankerville, hillside B&amp;B / caravans</p> <p>In town, low newton to cornhill</p> <p>Cafes</p>
What will you enjoy doing in the town?	<p>Eating, window shopping, visiting specialist shops, finding out what there is to do in the town</p>	<p>Ideally going to pub with like minded people for good food / drink / atmosphere and meeting kindred spirits!</p>	<p>Not a lot! Look around shops</p>
What will you do nearby (visits, activities,	<p>Chillingham castle, Ford &amp; Etal estates, walking, Alnwick gardens, visit battle sites, coastal visits, valleys, Holy</p>	<p>Coastal Visit, Surfing</p>	<p>Walking Wooler common</p> <p>/valleys &amp; hills</p> <p>Enjoy heritage and</p>

etc)?	Island, castles and county homes, visit the National Park		culture esp. archaeology Close proximity to the coast
What will you like most?	Central location, quiet roads, peace & tranquillity	Space, tranquillity, adrenalin and the hills!	Peace, Tranquillity, security, people, fresh air, quiet roads
What will you not like about the town?	Bland high street needs features – poor entrance Plastic windows – not appropriate No central attraction (indoor) poor signage	Nowhere to meet at night Lack of identity No nucleus of outdoor people No big shop to provide equipment	Bottom road is an eyesore (Redpath's northwards), lack of quality evening meals & use of local produce
What do you wish there was but is not available?	Indoor attraction Better public transport Sauna, gym, pool, Jacuzzi More varied evening offer – cinema, bistro, live music... Entertainment	Gear shops, better signs, meeting place / pubs for like minded people	Public transport, something to do when it's raining Homestay
How will you feel at the end of your visit?	Invigorated, desire to return	Exhilarated!	Relaxed, Refreshed, Gently confirming