

Cumbria Tourism Sustainable Tourism Action Plan

[Following the NWDA's "It's Good for Business" Framework and Sustainable Tourism Action Plan model, adapted and prioritised for Cumbria] and Key Intervention Areas from "The Economic Implications of Climate Change legislation for Cumbria" report, June 2008 [CV, CSP, NWDA]*

Delivery Area: Accreditation				
Action	Rationale	Organisation Lead/Partners	Target / Priority Red = High Green = Medium	CT Team lead & contact: [D = Development I = Industry Services M = Marketing C/F = Corporate / Finance]
1. Adopt & promote Green Tourism Accreditation schemes throughout Cumbria.	<p>The Green Tourism Business Scheme [GTBS] is an existing, nationally recognised scheme which provides standards and a process for continued improvement. It provides a structure for business, a source of advice and expertise and has some recognition by visitors. All NW Tourist Boards have agreed to recommend the scheme to businesses in their respective areas.</p> <p>[54 establishments from Cumbria were registered with GTBS, as at end of May 2009, this had dropped to 52 as at 16.10.09 and now stands at just 47 on 17.12.09]. Cumbria Tourism has undertaken GTBS accreditation for our own organisation, as an example to others. Other national schemes include the David Bellamy Conservation Award [for caravan and camping operators], with over 100 organisations currently listed from Cumbria.</p> <p>Destination Management Systems will automatically receive updates of Visit Britain/AA gradings; work is currently being undertaken by New Vision to enable the updating of GTBS graded businesses onto the Cumbria DMS network, alongside development of a GTBS website to allow accredited businesses to take on-line, direct bookings.</p>	NWDA/ CT/Natural Economy/TCP/New Vision	<p>250 businesses nationally accredited by 2018.</p> <p>CT achieving GTBS accreditation by June 2009.</p>	I & M [note; GTBS Gold Award achieved on 19 June 2009]
2. Explore the idea of a 'Staged Approach' to GTBS accreditation.	<p>For many businesses, national GTBS may be a step too far. There are various steps which businesses might take en route to GTBS, for example, using locally available, CBEN and Resource Efficiency advice & support as a "staging post" approach to ultimate GTBS [or appropriate] national accreditation.</p> <p>Cumbria Tourism's Quality Cumbria Assessor will advise and signpost businesses to the most appropriate scheme in the first instance. Cumbria Tourism has successfully applied for funding via the Cumbria Climate Change Fund to offer "Green Advantage" seminars and training for SMEs, providing initial information on environmental management and signposting to other local sources of advice and/or relevant Accreditation, inc. CBEN, GTBS or David Bellamy as appropriate.</p>	NWDA/ CT/CREA/TCP/ Cumbria Green Business Forum	<p>80 seminar participants, resulting in 40 persons completing training by 31.3.10</p>	I & M [note; meeting facilitated and hosted by CT with GTBS and CREA/CBEN, 31.3.09, seeking an agreed Modus Operandi, working agreement in Cumbria - no progress to date, 16.10.09]
3. Promote the integration of sustainable principles into the national quality accreditation schemes.	<p>Sustainability needs to be "mainstream" rather than sidelined into a 'green' niche. To achieve this all accreditation should be about sustainability. It would also simplify things for businesses and reduce their costs. Work is already underway at national level, with VB's Green Start scheme as a stepping stone to GTBS.</p> <p>The free pilot is has now been evaluated and CT and local partners will monitor its usefulness and take up. [There were just 6 businesses from Cumbria who took part in the pilot and Visit Britain will be feeding back the results of their evaluation shortly].</p>	NWDA/Visit Britain/CT/CREA/TCP /Cumbria Green Business Forum		I & M [note; update awaited from Jason Freezer at Visit England on Green Start pilot in respect of Cumbrian SMEs, 16.10.09]

Delivery Area: Business Development Support				
Action	Rationale	Organisation Lead/ Partner	Target / Priority	CT Team lead/contact
4. Assist tourism businesses to become more resource efficient and provide assistance to help tourism businesses calculate and reduce their "carbon footprint".	Resource efficiency is an easy way into sustainability for many tourism businesses because it directly reduces their costs. Resource efficiency also directly contributes to the reduction of carbon emissions and is a key element of environmental sustainability. NWDA has developed a common web page on sustainability, [Low Cost Actions] which will be added to CT's industry-facing website. CT & partners will investigate practical "Carbon foot-printing and decision making tools" for SMEs, possibly as an on-line tool.	NWDA/ BREW partners/CT/ CREA/Green Business Forum	"Low Cost Actions" pages on CT's corporate website by end of December 2008. Carbon Footprinting Toolkit available on-line by December 2009.	I & D [note; "Low Cost Actions" included in comprehensive Sustainable Tourism pages for new Corporate Website, launched at the beginning of July] A Carbon Footprinting Tool (developed by Small World Consulting) is currently being piloted with 10 tourism businesses in the county to gauge its potential use on a wider scale. The tool will be tested further at workshops with a view to its circulation and use across the industry in 2010.
5. Identify and work with Tourism Business Clusters which are committed to sustainability.	Supporting those who are most interested will be a quick win in terms of impact and will develop more exemplars to spread the word. In Cumbria, this is already happening, via on-going support to the Green Business Forum and the Tourism & Conservation Partnership; however more needs to be done to further develop local capacity for environmental auditing and advice.	CT/private sector operators/CREA /Green Business Forum/TCP/North Pennines AONB Partnership		D & I [note; ongoing, along with increased promotion via new content and reciprocal links to partners from Corporate Website]
6. Encourage use of local products and services through work with Tourism Business Clusters and providing marketing advantage to participating businesses.	Minimises transport impact and supports local economy, culture and sense of place. Cumbria already has a good base of local food producers and scope to develop local sourcing initiatives. Provides an important point of differentiation for local businesses and potential market advantage.	Food NW/ CT/BL/MIC/ CREA		D & I & M [note; Food and Drink promotion via the new, "Taste District" brochure. A new Food Tourism Coordinator has been appointed, to optimise the benefits of food tourism to the whole region, through partnership working and the development and promotion of local and regional food - based in Cumbria Tourism's offices and reporting to the Development Director].
7. Ensure business advice provided to tourism businesses through Business Link, its website and its suppliers is firmly rooted in sustainability principles.	In order to "mainstream" sustainability then business support advice needs to reflect entire range of sustainability principles. Changes taking place in Business Link are increasingly "regionalising" support; CT will lobby for more local delivery in the BL model and a dedicated Tourism Sector Broker for Cumbria.	NWDA/BREW Business Link /CT/CREA		I & D

Delivery Area: Marketing and Product Development				
Action	Rationale	Organisation Lead/ Partner	Target / Priority	CT Team lead/contact
8. Identify and promote environmental best practice & businesses which excel in being sustainable.	<p>Cumbria Tourism has been successful in achieving GTBS [Gold] accreditation for our own corporate office; we believe this is essential to be able to speak from experience and encourage others. We will acknowledge and reward those businesses who are demonstrating environmental best practice. Businesses are more persuaded by other businesses than by public agencies and we should build up a library of best practice examples to encourage environmentally sustainable practices.</p> <p>Initial Case-studies have been prepared and are now on our websites; CT will work with partners to identify further case studies, using a common template.</p> <p>The pilot Tourism Connect accommodation improvement programme incorporated advice and assistance on Corporate Social Responsibility and a condition of grant aid was that businesses achieved a minimum GTBS or CBEN Bronze Award. We are currently seeking additional funding for a 2nd phase of Tourism Connect, where this work can be built upon with more businesses.</p>	NWDA/CT/CREA/ Green Business Forum/TCP	Initial Case studies to be produced and published on the corporate website by end of December 2008 and refreshed / added to thereafter .	I & D & M [note; suite of Case Studies now form part of new Sustainable Tourism pages on Corporate Website, launched in July, with content from partners and commercial members; these will be added to and regularly refreshed]
9. Use GTBS [or other accreditation schemes] as a point of marketing advantage for tourism businesses and Cumbria as a destination.	<p>To encourage participation in the schemes and demonstrate that Cumbria is serious about sustainable tourism. While consumer interest is not as yet widespread it fits with early market trends. GTBS will be promoted by CT on customer-facing websites and in brochures, with quality accreditation scheme graphics & text with NQAS etc. Businesses with other green accreditations will also be “annotated” by Cumbria Tourism in key marketing & promotional media, inc. “golakes” and the Holiday Guide.</p> <p>A new “Sustainable Tourism Award” has been introduced into the annual CT Excellence Awards programme, to recognise businesses working towards environmental sustainability and communicating this to visitors.</p>	NWDA/ CT/GTBS/VB/	Customer-facing website [golakes] will include & promote “green” accreditations alongside quality graphics by June 09.	M & I [note; DMS records now appended to show Green accreditation. Where to Stay homepage has now been improved to explain the different schemes, inc. GTBS, CBEN, Green Start]
10. Support the development & marketing of visitor attractions which are environmentally sustainable and promote Cumbria as a “Green” [sustainable] destination.	<p>While tourism products based on the environment are only one part of sustainable tourism they frequently involve those most committed to sustainable business practices. Encouraging their development will help support this growing sector.</p> <p>CT will help to develop & market more Natural Tourism projects, as exemplars, following work to identify a Wildlife Cluster, [“The Wild Zone”] which will be included on the golakes website and added to over time.</p>	NWDA/ CT/Natural Economy Northwest [Natural Tourism project]/LDNPA	40 SMEs joining the Wild Zone by Dec. 09	D & M [note; web content being uploaded 10.6.09, “Wild Zone cluster group” established with 30 members to date]
11. Continue to support and promote visitor payback schemes.	<p>Both encourages responsible tourism and directly links visitors’ involvement & contributions to local environmental improvements &/or conservation projects. It also provides a powerful channel for business engagement and encouraging principles of sustainability. A successful model already exists in Cumbria, upon which we will build with partners.</p>	CT/TCP/private sector operators		M & I [note; Sustainable Tourism pages on Corporate Website and new reciprocal link to T & CP; Green Tourism pages now available on Golakes]

Delivery Area: Destination Planning & Management				
Action	Rationale	Organisation Lead/Partner	Target / Priority	CT Team lead/contact
12. Ensure that future Cumbria Destination Management Plans have full consideration of sustainability issues.	If sustainability is to be “mainstreamed”, then the DMP process needs to acknowledge same.	CT & local delivery partners		D
13. Support the development & promotion of ‘ local distinctiveness ’ through providing encouragement and practical advice to other agencies such as local authorities and businesses.	Local character and distinctiveness differentiates a destination, giving a unique sense of the place, its history and its culture, which is attractive to visitors. We will continue to promote local distinctiveness via an extension of on-going work at CT and with the involvement of local authority partners.	NWDA/CT/Local Authorities/ private sector /North Pennines AONB		D & M [note; Sense of Place web content being developed for 53 places/communities of interest - 30 live on GoLakes currently, remainder to go live by end of December 09.]
14. Promotion of local procurement of goods and services, use of local materials and sympathetic design.	A focus on buying locally helps support the local economy - businesses, jobs, skills, communities, as well as minimising transport [road] miles. This can be carried out via an extension of on-going work at CT and with the involvement of local authority partners. The Tourism Connect programme promoted and encouraged the use of local architects, designers and craft skills and CT will be seeking additional funding for a 2 nd phase to assist further accommodation improvement projects, with knock-on benefits in the local supply chain. CT has developed a Sustainable Procurement Policy and will seek to act as an example of good practice by including an assessment of sustainability issues in all procurement processes, contracts and tendering procedures.	NWDA/CT/Local Authorities/ private sector		D & M [note; internal procurement policy and practices have been assessed as part of CT’s Carbon Footprint review , last done in 2007 and updated in August ‘09. Marketing team ensure local businesses inc. in tender invitations]
15. Influence sustainable transport policy & use in relation to tourism and promote public transport, walking and cycling routes.	Transport is a key issue in terms of environmental sustainability because of carbon emissions. While there is a limit to CT’s influence in terms of policy planning, there is a role to play, in terms of engaging, influencing and advocacy. We can help in preparing integrated transport plans for both urban and rural destinations aimed at meeting visitors’ needs and promoting and facilitating the use of public transport by visitors, with information on our golakes website. For example, CT is already engaged with key strategic partners in development of Sustainable Transport Policies and supporting funding bids, eg. Lake District NPA’s Sustainable Transport project, via the NWOP and working with LDNPA & FLD on “give the driver a break” information / routes. CT will promote “non-car” transport to and within Cumbria wherever possible in all media publications.	CT/CV/Local authorities/ Highways Agency/private sector operators/ LDNPA/FLD/North Pennines AONB		D & M [note; Green Travel Plan for CT being prepared as part of our commitment to Climate Change adaptation/mitigation - see 17b; walking & cycling routes on 3 websites, golakes, lakedistrictoutdoors and cyclingcumbria. Route/accommodation booking system under development via golakes; Sustainable Transport information is also available.]
16. Public Realm & Environmental Improvement Projects.	Although generally the responsibility of others, CT will actively promote the importance of “public realm” in the context of the visitor offer and work with local partners to make the case for public sector funding for improvement schemes which conserve and enhance the natural environment and benefit locals and visitors alike.	NWDA/CT/ LDNPA/ Local authorities		D [note; ongoing influencing role - agreement reached to establishment of a PRIF in partnership with local authorities and public utilities, lead by CCC/CT]

Delivery Area: Advocacy & Partnership				
Action	Rationale	Organisation Lead/Partner	Target / Priority	CT Team lead/contact
17. Cumbria Climate Change Strategy & Northwest Climate Change Action Plan.	CT has been actively involved in the preparation and development of this important sub-regional Plan and will continue to play a key role in the on-going work of the Cumbria Strategic Partnership's Climate Change Task Group. We will ensure that our actions are consistent with and complement the emerging Cumbria Climate Change Action Plan and the Northwest Climate Change Action Plan, [via CT's Sustainable Development Objectives] Specific actions arising from the Cumbria Climate Change Action Plan are detailed below:	CSP/CT/CCC/ Private sector		C & D [note; CT has formally signed the Cumbria Climate Change Commitment, 16.3.09, along with 43 key strategic partners]
17(a) Review of Non-transport Tourism Carbon Emissions	To undertake a Review of Non-transport Tourism Carbon Emissions, working with partners, agencies and public bodies to develop a joint strategy and action plan to reduce the carbon footprint of tourism in Cumbria.	CT/LDNPA/CSP/CGBF	Review & Strategy in place by 31.3.10 Target; 11% reduction in CO2 emissions from 2007 baseline, by 31.3.11	C, D, I
17(b) Employee Travel Plan	CT will develop an Employee [Green] Travel Plan to reduce CO2 emissions through active management and on-going monitoring of business travel and commuting.	CT	Employee [Green] Travel Plan and system in place by 1.9.09	[note; work underway]
17(c) Pilot Commercial Waste Recycling project	CT will work with Resource Cumbria Partners to facilitate the recycling of commercial waste including a pilot project to minimise waste from the tourism sector.	CT/CCC/CGBF	SMEs to benefit from improved recycling services by 31.3.10	[note; Waste Survey results now published, from CCC/Strategic Waste Partnership & CT is working with Strategic Waste Partnership and LDNP to investigate funding for a potential pilot project and suitable sites]
18. Partnership activities.	We can maximise our impact by working in partnership. For example, CT will continue to play a part in the following partnership activities; Lake District Still Waters Partnership - a major programme to improve the quality of the lakes and river catchment in the county, focussing on Bassenthwaite and Windermere. Morecambe Bay Partnership - CT is involved in collaboration and communication with key agencies, businesses and Local Authorities around the Bay area, both to protect the natural asset and improve the local economy. Lake District National Park & AONB partnerships - a joint agency approach to planning and managing important national landscape designations. Joint marketing campaigns with the LDNPA. On-going support for Tourism & Conservation Partnership, Cumbria Green Business Forum and North Pennines AONB Partnership.	Local Authorities/ LDNPA/MBP/ Private sector/ AONBs		C & D & M [Note; CT and LDNP are working on a joint Events Campaign, now into its 2 nd year; the NP is a key partner with the Adventure Capital programme, and also participated in the Cultural project "Fleur de Sel"]
19. Public Relations.	CT's public relations team will continue to work with members and strategic partners to promote and "spread the word" about Cumbria's environmental credentials and use Cumbria Tourism's own efforts to combat climate change as an example of good practice. The recently published ABC Green Consumer Guide, produced in partnership with TCP, Invest in Cumbria and FLD is an excellent	CT/TCP/Local Authorities/FLD/ LDNPA/Private sector		M

	example of good practice and is now available on-line. Regular articles will be included in “Viewpoint” on sustainable tourism, to promote and drive take up of on-line advice and use of the Carbon Footprinting Toolkit.			
20. Research & Intelligence.	Up to date, relevant and accurate information is essential to inform policy, lobby for increased funding and to feed in to future strategies and work plans. However, information needs to be collected, collated and analysed before it can truly be classed as ‘intelligence’. CT will continue to undertake timely research, surveys and statistical updates and share same with local delivery partners, e.g. updating the Visitor Attitudes Survey, Market Town Benchmarking studies, STEAM research, etc. We will also ensure that regional / national data sets and statistics are “Cumbria-proofed” in relation to the tourism sector. Future business surveys will include questions about awareness and use of environmental advice and support and CT’s on-line resources.	CT/Cumbria Intelligence Observatory/ Local Authorities/ LDNPA/RIU	Establish a process and measure SME take-up of the Carbon Footprinting Toolkit and CBEN/GTBS accreditation, against a target of 250 businesses nationally accredited by 2018	C & D

* **The Economic Implications of Climate Change Legislation for Cumbria - précis of findings in relation to the Tourism sector:**

The aim of the study was to assess the economic implications of EU and UK climate change policy and legislation on the Cumbrian economy and included a calculation of Cumbria’s “carbon footprint”, whilst also taking into account the effects of Tourism.

Total *CO2 emissions* in the county amount to 7.4 million tonnes p.a. Tourism accounts for between 750,000 and 1,080,000 tonnes of CO2 [10-15%] of total emissions in transport and buildings energy use and the contribution to retail, catering and recreation activities.

The consultants stress that this is only an estimate and cannot be used for monitoring purposes, but their best estimate is that tourism accommodation and travel accounts for approx. 7.3% of total CO2 in the county and that tourists generate approx. 14% of the total municipal waste in the county.

However, *Methane emissions* are equivalent to 1.3 million tonnes p.a. of CO2, but as yet there is no legislation which directly targets these emissions and therefore they are not included in the above total. [It is worth noting that these emissions are greater than the estimated total CO2 emissions for tourism in the county].

The study sought to identify the most promising areas for further intervention, in terms of the potential to create or safeguard local jobs when compared with the Climate Change legislation “drivers”. One of these areas was “Promoting Cumbria as a “Green Tourism Destination”, by providing low carbon accommodation and transport and using local produce”, alongside “Providing more assistance to businesses [especially SMEs] to reduce their carbon footprints”. It is recognised that increasing the number of tourists will certainly benefit Cumbria’s economy, but if not well managed, this could also increase the sector’s carbon footprint. However, if these tourists would have otherwise flown to more “far-flung” destinations, then Cumbria could claim the net “carbon benefit”.

The Key Intervention Areas with regard to the Tourism sector are identified as; Developing the Green Tourism Offering and Assistance to Businesses to Reduce their Carbon Footprint.

Specific actions have therefore been incorporated into the Sustainable Tourism Action Plan to take these suggested interventions forward.