

REPORT ON BUSHMILLS PILOT SURVEY FOR SUSTAINABLE INDICATORS

1. INTRODUCTION

As part of the study on Sustainable Tourism Indicators for the North East carried out by the TTC International consortium, Market Research Northern Ireland was commissioned to undertake a survey of attitudes to tourism in the town of Bushmills. The survey was carried out on Saturday 2 November 2001. 200 residents were interviewed in their homes and the survey is accurate to + or – 7%.

Bushmills was chosen as a town that is close to key tourism amenities in the North East but which has a high percentage of long-term local residents also. The budget constrained the survey to one town and a second would have been surveyed with a characteristic of lesser tourism tradition. However Bushmills had primacy as the concept of sustainable tourism is concerned with planning to prevent the damaging aspects of the industry and to measure change. This town was considered to have a reasonable chance of having some negative attitudes stemming from congestion, increase in second homes etc.

2. Profile of Sample

The only constraint on the sample was that it could only cover residents, either permanent or second-home owners, not short stay holiday or other visitors.

3% of the sample was second homeowners and the remainder permanent residents. Of the latter 62% owned their own home and 38% rented. 81% of the permanent residents had lived over 10 years in Bushmills while only 3% had lived less than 1 year.

30% of the sample was from ABC1 classes and the remainder C2DE. Second homeowners were 80% ABC1.

67% of households had 1 or more in employment, with the % rising to 77% for ABC1s. 24% of households had at least 1 resident unemployed and receiving benefit.

43% of households had 1 or more children.

The sample reflects a fair cross section of the Bushmills community. No question on religion was asked.

3. How important do you consider tourism to be to the local economy?

95% of the sample considered tourism to be Very Important or Important (78% Very) and the remainder had no strong views. For ABC1s 83% considered it Very important.

4. Name the most important tourism employer in the area – unprompted responses.

47% chose Bushmills Distillery, 18% the Giant's Causeway and 9% local hotels. 8% chose the National Trust while next came NITB and Moyle DC at 1%

5. Estimate the Importance of the Following to Tourism in the Area

	%Very Important	%Quite Important	No strong views	Not very Important	Not at all Important
Bushmills Distillery	96	4	-	-	-
Giant's Causeway	97	3	-	-	-
National Trust	78	16	5	1	-
Moyle DC	36	25	28	10	1
Hotels	75	17	6	2	-
Pubs	70	20	7	3	-
Restaurants	74	20	5	1	-
P'rush Amusements	66	19	10	5	-
B&Bs	80	15	4	1	-

6. Do you welcome tourists coming to your area?

90% claimed to welcome tourists 'A Lot' and 9% 'Some'. The remaining 1% was not hostile!

7. What benefits do you think tourism brings the area?

94% considered employment to be the largest benefit, followed by 90% who believed it brought benefits of amenities to locals. 89% thought tourism 'added to the atmosphere' and 90% thought it gave a chance to meet more people. 85% thought it gave Pride to the area and 83% thought tourism helps the environment. An overwhelming 99% considered it brought economic benefit.

8. What drawbacks do you think tourism brings to the area?

65% considered that summer congestion was the issue, while 64% felt tourism made property more expensive. 51% showed concern that employment from tourism may be seasonal while 19% thought employment in tourism tended to go to outsiders. Or 32% thought it had only menial jobs.

59% considered noise from tourism to be an issue, and 53% were worried by resulting pollution & litter.

54% thought tourism encouraged second homeowners and 41% thought it added to the rates burden.

8% thought tourism had no drawbacks.

9. Are you aware of local community organisations involved in tourism?

23% claimed to be aware and the remainder unaware.

Name the Organisations – Answered by the 23%

Organisation	%
National Trust	24
Bushmills Community	16
Moyle DC	16
TIC	9
Dervock Community	2
Craftworks	2
Bushmills Residential Outdoor Pursuits	4
Causeway Initiative	13
Other	4
Don't Know	1

10. Does tourism bring benefits to local transport?

31% considered tourism brought 'a lot' of benefit and 20% 'some'. 28% considered it did not help 'much' or 'at all'.

11. What is your attitude to second homeowners in the area?

54% welcomed them a lot or a little, while 30% were indifferent. 16% thought them not very or not at all welcome.

12. Respondents were asked if they considered there was adequate training for those wanting to get into tourism?

49% thought no, 41% thought yes and 10% didn't know. In naming likely training establishments 54% named Portrush Catering College, 38% the local College of Further education and 43% University of Ulster.

13. Respondents were asked to consider how damage to the environment through pollution could be offset?

Method	%
Recycling	40
Energy Efficiency	11
Use of Public Transport	47
Cycling & Walking Routes	46
Causeway Initiative	29
Don't Know	24
Other	1

14. Respondents were asked if the community would be better off with more or less tourism?

65% believe that a lot more tourism is needed and 20% some more. 15% were happy with the present level and none wanted less.

15. Do tourists disrupt the life of Bushmills?

1% said often and 6% occasionally, while 8% thought sometimes. 20% thought very little and 66% never.

16. Name one thing, which could be changed to improve tourism in the area?

18% thought improved leisure facilities were needed, 16% better public transport, 8% more hotels and 6% more car parking. 4% considered easing traffic congestion, 2% cleaning up the area and 1% reopening the Causeway tram.

17. Crime and Tourism

90% had never heard of tourists committing crime in the area and the remainder heard of it rarely or sometimes.

13% had heard of tourists being attacked sometimes or fairly often, 20% rarely and 67% never.

18. Respondents were asked to give an opinion on the following issues or places concerning tourism rated on a scale from Very Important to Quite Important down to Not Very and Not at All Important

Issue	Very Important	Quite Important	No strong views	Not very Important	Not at all Important
Giant's Causeway	99	1	-	-	-
Bushmills Distillery	97	3	-	-	-
Portrush & Resorts	78	15	5	2	-
Fishing	72	22	5	1	-
Golf	80	14	5	1	-
Beaches	73	13	12	2	-
Peace & Quiet	69	17	11	4	-
Countryside	76	15	8	1	-
Walking & Cycling	69	18	10	3	-
History	75	16	7	1	1
Good Food	84	10	5	1	-
Pubs	78	14	6	2	-

19. Summary

We have not expressed comment on the responses but rather left the statistics to speak for themselves. The community sees the importance of tourism and largely wants to see it grow. Harmful effects are not considered too severe and environmental concerns are not of very high prominence.