

# Creative Winchester

## A Tourism Strategy for the Winchester District

Creative Winchester: A Tourism Strategy for the Winchester District

2004 – 2008

*"If one place lies at the centre of English history and embodies the romantic vision of an English heartland, it is Winchester – a beautiful city surrounded by water meadows and rolling chalk downland."*

LONELY PLANET: WALKING IN BRITAIN



*"It is this Winchester which combines ancient and modern, city life and country traditions, an admiration for the past with an eye to the future which will be the key to a successful tourism industry."*

Community Services Department

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## introductory remarks

Those who are lucky enough to live in Winchester and the surrounding District are justifiably proud of their beautiful surroundings. Research shows<sup>1</sup> that residents are keen to share the heritage, culture and rural tranquillity of the area with visitors, and many are directly involved in the tourism industry of the District through their work, leisure or educational pursuits. Local residents believe that their needs and interests are largely compatible with those of the 4.5 million tourists who come here each year. Moreover, there is a clear appreciation that visitors add to the vitality and diversity of the area, bringing both social and economic benefits. Tourists generate around £171 million in the District annually, and this expenditure in turn supports nearly 3,700 jobs.<sup>2</sup>

Cathedral cities such as Winchester have always enjoyed a close relationship with tourists, from early pilgrims to modern day leisure shoppers. But too much of anything can be a problem:



too many – or badly managed – visitors can aggravate environmental problems, such as congestion, litter and pollution. In the rural areas, an overdeveloped tourist industry can lead to urbanisation – for example through excessive signage and increased vehicle movements.

The Winchester District will always be attractive to visitors, but it is important to ensure that our tourist industry remains a sustainable one. This means encouraging visits by those who make a positive contribution to the District, whilst working to minimise any negative impacts

associated with such visits. A sustainable industry is also one in which local businesses and residents are actively engaged.

This strategy considers the needs and aspirations of three distinct groups – our visitors, our local tourism industry and the community – and sets out Winchester City Council's vision for a way forward to which all three can subscribe.

Our thanks go to all those who have contributed to this document. I look forward to working with you on the delivery of the detailed action plan.

**Cllr Thérèse Evans**

Portfolio Holder for Culture, Heritage and Sport

<sup>1</sup>Winchester Citizens' Panel Survey 2001

<sup>2</sup>The Economic Impact of Tourism on Winchester District 2003