
**BASELINE AUDIT OF THE NORTH EAST AREA IN RELATION TO THE
CAUSEWAY INITIATIVE**

Final Report

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BASELINE AUDIT OF THE NORTH EAST AREA IN RELATION TO THE CAUSEWAY INITIATIVE 1

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BACKGROUND

- 1) The Causeway Initiative is an interim partnership funded under the EU Support Programme for Peace and Reconciliation and arose from concerns about the pressures and impacts of tourism on the north coast area.

The Initiative covers eight District Council areas and spans most of County Antrim and parts of County Londonderry. The partnership to develop and implement the Initiative includes the seven local authorities in the target area– (Limavady, Coleraine, Moyle, Larne, Ballymoney, Ballymena, Carrickfergus and Newtownabbey) the Northern Ireland Tourist Board, the Environment and Heritage Service, the Causeway Coast and Glens Ltd (regional tourism marketing organisation), and the National Trust as a major coastal landowner in the area.

- 2) The main purpose of the Initiative is to promote visitor and environmental management in the initiative area and to promote sustainable tourism.

This report provides a baseline audit in the area in relation to the aims and objectives of the Initiative, against which future progress can be gauged.

SCOPE OF THE BASELINE AUDIT

The main objectives of the Causeway Initiative are as follows:

- to establish a Tourism and Environment Partnership for the North East area;
- to undertake a comprehensive Visitor and Environmental Management Strategy and associated research to promote sustainable development in the area;
- to increase visitor awareness of the special attractions and sensitivities of the area;
- to promote the development of pilot sustainable tourism initiatives;
- to promote best practice visitor management at a number of key sites including the Giant's Causeway; and
- to source long term funding for the further development of the partnership and implementation of key objectives as identified within the Visitor and Environmental Management Strategy.

The scope of the survey is therefore concentrated within the areas of attitudes and current practice in sustainable tourism, visitor management, nature conservation and environmental management.

THE TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE BASELINE AUDIT

- 3) To provide a basis to evaluate the impact of the Causeway Initiative in the development of effective visitor and environmental management in the area.
- 4) To provide an assessment of the area with regard to the following issues:

Tourism

- a) The level of strategic guidance for tourism development in the North East Area
- b) The level of strategic guidance for visitor and environmental management in the North East area
- c) The level of strategic guidance for tourism marketing within the North East area
- d) The level of co-ordination between visitor and environmental management , tourism development and tourism marketing in the North East area.
- e) The level, quality and availability of visitor information provided
- f) The geographical spread of tourism activity and visitor pressure within the North East area
- g) Understanding of environmental issues and sustainable tourism within the industry
- h) Number of examples of best practice sustainable tourism projects in the area
- i) The degree to which best environmental; practice ahs been incorporated within the industry

Environment

- a) The level and quality of existing environmental management in the area
- b) The level and quality of strategic guidance for environmental management in the area
- c) The level and quality of information and interpretative facilities in the area together with availability of the same
- d) The level of public awareness and appreciation of environmental issues
- e) The level of available resources for environmental management initiatives in the area
- f) Understanding of tourism, recreation and visitor management issues within the environmental sector
- g) Number of examples of best practice visitor and environmental management projects on the ground

Relationships

- a) Level of understanding between the tourism and environment sectors
- b) Level of contact between both sectors
- c) Number of management initiatives relating to tourism and environment in the area
- d) Level of contact between the environment ad tourism sectors and other stakeholders in the rural area
- e) Level of involvement of the private and voluntary sectors in management initiatives to date.

WORKING DEFINITION OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISM USED IN THE STUDY

- 5) The Causeway Initiative uses the following definition of sustainable tourism:

“Tourism that is economically viable, responds to the needs of visitors, respects the environment and is acceptable to the majority of people who live there”.

- 6) The Northern Ireland Tourist Board in its guidance to tourism interests has described sustainability and sustainable tourism as follows:

“Sustainability involves the wise use of resources in ways which do not deprive future generations of their availability or their benefits”

“Sustainable tourism.... Recognises the advantages of working with the environment rather than against it. By taking full account of the potential effect of a proposed development and its associated services, problems of pollution, traffic congestion and other impacts can be minimised”.

“Sustainable tourism is also about working in the community, creating and maintaining quality long-term jobs, buying goods and services locally and..fitting in with the character of the locality”

“Sustainable tourism is not a narrow, specialist market nor merely an idealistic goal, but an attitude and approach which influences all aspects of tourism for the good. It is a tourism that respects the environment and operates within the tolerance of people who live here. A tourism that is light on the land – a long-term tourism”.

- 7) In 1991 a Government Task Force involving the English Tourist Board and the Countryside Commission set out seven principles of sustainable tourism as follows:

(1) The environment has an intrinsic value, which outweighs its value as a tourism asset. Its enjoyment by future generations and its long term survival should not be prejudiced by short-term considerations

(2) Tourism should be recognised as a positive activity with the benefit to develop the community and the place as well as the visitor

(3) The relationship between tourism and the environment must be managed so that the environment is sustainable in the long-term. Tourism must not be allowed to damage the resource, prejudice its future enjoyment or bring unacceptable impacts

(4) Tourism activities and developments should respect the scale, nature and character of the place in which they are sited.

(5) In any location harmony should be sought between the needs of the visitor, the place and the host community.

(6) In a dynamic world, some change is inevitable and a change can often be beneficial. Adaptation to change should however not be at the expense of any of these principles

(7) The tourism industry, local authorities and environmental agencies all have a duty to respect the above principles and to work together to achieve their practical realisation.

- 8) Common to all definitions are the following three dimensions:
- a) The economic dimension – considering profitability, jobs and the local economy in both the short and long term
 - b) The social and cultural dimension recognising the role of communities in hosting visitors, the impacts of tourism on their daily lives and culture, the scale of communities, settlements and services and their capacity to absorb visitors, and the potential gains to communities through tourism
 - c) The environmental dimension, considering the need for tourism to minimise its environmental impact and to maintain the natural resource both for its own intrinsic value and for its role in attracting and delighting the visitor.
- 9) Against this background the following tests of sustainable tourism were agreed prior to the study with Causeway Initiative

Sustainable tourism

- *Is low in impact on its surroundings*
- *Is economically viable, and provides good jobs.*
- *Is beneficial to the people who live in an area*
- *Ensures that the inconveniences of tourism do not outweigh the benefits*
- *Is a kind of tourism that respects the scale and nature of the area visited.*
- *Is a kind of tourism in which retaining the natural, built and cultural heritage of area is considered to be more important than individual gain.*
- *Is a kind of tourism in which the host community plays an important role in the quality and authenticity of the offering*
- *Retains the resource for the benefit of subsequent generations.*
- *Promotes harmony between the needs of visitors, the place and the community.*

RESEARCH ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN

- 10) The scope of the Causeway Initiative objectives guided the search for baseline information and led to the following research elements being undertaken:
- a) A search of context materials to enable recording of the current position in relation to the following:

- i) Environmental management, visitor management and sustainable tourism guidance within statutory planning materials
 - ii) Northern Ireland and developing all island strategic approaches to sustainable tourism, tourism marketing, sustainable development, biodiversity, coastal zone management, upland management, conservation designation. The extent to which relevant specific guidance for the Causeway Initiative area is available.
 - iii) Local strategic approaches – tourism, economic, countryside, or visitor management strategies by District Councils, the Regional Tourism organisation and other partners on sustainable tourism, tourism marketing and visitor and environmental management.
 - iv) Emerging baseline information, objectives and priorities from the ERM visitor and environmental management strategy
 - v) Current patterns of tourism, recreation and visitor activity in the area, including site and attraction numbers, trends and seasonality, lengths of stay, extent of participation in activity.
 - vi) Current organisational structures and arrangements, including co-operative arrangements on sustainable tourism.
 - vii) Current funding arrangements and prospects for the Initiative
- b) Additionally special surveys were carried out to gather relevant data to provide baseline information against specific indicators. Surveys were as follows:
- i) Tour operator survey- a telephone survey of the 20 tour operators considered by the Giants Causeway Visitor Centre management to be those most prominently using the area. (names appended)
 - ii) A visitor survey was carried out at 10 sites on three days in May (including a bank holiday weekend). A total of 414 visitors were interviewed. The sites were chosen to give a spread across all of the Council areas; to include those with mainly domestic visitors and those with a high proportion of out-of-state tourists as follows; and to sample those locations with the greatest current throughputs. Survey locations were as follows:

Benone Beach	Carnfunnock Country Park
Dunluce Castle	Patterson's Spade Mill
Giant's Causeway	The Ecos Centre
Rathlin Island	Drumaheglis Marina
Glenariff Forest Park	Carrickfergus Castle
- A survey of 75 community groups in the area (10 survey forms returned)

Face to face interviews with 22 key tourism and environmental management actors within the area

A questionnaire survey of businesses in membership of the regional tourism organisation, with 78 returns.

- 11) Data from these surveys are used to illustrate baseline information under key indicators. These indicators are a combination of those suggested initially by the Causeway initiative in the study brief and others developed at the outset of the study to supplement these. All indicators relate to the objectives of the Causeway Initiative either through its own implementation of projects or through its influencing or co-ordination of others.

SUSTAINABLE TOURISM INDICATORS:

The following indicators were used to assess the baseline for sustainable tourism in the Causeway Initiative Area

- The extent to which strategic policy and guidance on sustainable tourism is available and known to key actors
- The availability of strategic advice on visitor and environmental management.
- The extent to which strategic advice on sustainable tourism and on visitor and environmental management addresses current issues in the Causeway Initiative area
- The extent to which people involved in tourism and visitor planning and delivery are aware of existence and content (key elements) of statutory and strategic advice.
- The extent to which people involved in tourism and visitor planning and delivery apply key elements of statutory and strategic advice.
- Current practices in tourism marketing - e.g. level and purpose of use of images from sensitive areas for nature conservation, the extent of promotion of sensitive areas.
- The extent of teamwork undertaken between tourism agencies, visitor and accommodation providers, and bodies with responsibility for countryside, conservation and visitor management.
- Nature, type and scope of information (e.g. website, brochure, tour operator) for visitors to the area and extent to which it addresses visitor and environmental management issues and promotes sustainable tourism activity.
- Current numbers and patterns of visits and the extent to which visits are spread throughout the area.
- The number of identified examples of sustainable tourism good practice in the area.
- Extent of availability and uptake of training and awareness raising opportunities in sustainable tourism.
- Promotion of sustainable tourism in the area
- Levels of tourism income in the area, and the distribution of income through the area
- Visitor expenditure in the area
- Employment in tourism
- Number of Blue Flag beaches and Seaside Awards in the North East Area.
- Occupancy of tourist accommodation- Hotel, Guest House, B&B and self-catering

ENVIRONMENT AND VISITOR MANAGEMENT INDICATORS:

These indicators were developed to assess the extent to which the Causeway Initiative area has effective arrangements for visitor and environmental management, and the level of awareness amongst visitors and service providers of the environmental sensitivities of the area and their potential impacts on these.

- The number of countryside sites that have appropriate environmental and visitor management planning and actions in place, or in development.
- The number of sites with basic or more advanced interpretation of the natural, built, cultural or archaeological interest.
- The extent to which visitors are informed of the natural interest and sensitivities of countryside sites in the area.
- The amount of money spent on environmental management in relation to visited countryside sites in the area.
- The ratio of area tourism income to expenditure on management of the natural resource for tourism.
- Environmental management actions within the wider landscape
- Levels of awareness of arrangements for visitor and environmental management in the area
- Current sources of money for visitor and environmental management.
- Number of sites with nature conservation interest, considered to be in a favourable condition
- Number and status of protected landscape designations in the area
- Level of people's awareness of site designations in the area
- Information available about the designations and their main objectives, and the special interest and sensitivities of sites

INDICATORS OF THE EXTENT AND QUALITY OF RELATIONSHIPS AND CO-WORKING BETWEEN THE TOURISM AND ENVIRONMENT SECTORS

These indicators were developed to assess the extent to which the various bodies with responsibilities for aspects of tourism planning and provision work in a co-ordinated way to achieve joint objectives.

- Description of current structures and opportunities for teamwork. Extent of current agenda for teamwork between tourism interests and nature conservation/countryside management interests.
- Engagement of rural communities and small tourism businesses in planning for tourism development, tourism marketing, visitor management and environmental management.
- Engagement of tourism businesses in planning for tourism development, tourism marketing, environmental management, visitor management.
- Employment of local people within the sustainable tourism field.
- Sensitive mechanisms and forward planning between tourism marketing, tourism development and environmental management interests for the resolution of issues such as traffic congestion, overcrowding, arrangements for peak days
- Views on the importance of dialogue between people involved in visitor and environmental management and those involved in tourism

OTHER INDICATORS

Some additional indicators were developed to identify baselines in respect of communities and the impacts of tourism, planning effectiveness and tour operator attitudes as follows:

- Community gain from tourism - incidence of local people gaining new facilities/ employment/income from tourism
- Incidence of known damage to nature conservation sites in the area, from high visitor numbers
- Attitudes of tour operators, businesses and key actors towards protection of the natural resources of the Causeway Initiative area
- Visitor patterns, views and origins
- Accommodation provision
- Accommodation occupancy

BASELINE DATA

Within the following sections each of the indicators in the four preceding sections is taken individually and the baseline data gathered during the study is listed below it:

SUSTAINABLE TOURISM INDICATORS:

1) Extent to which strategic policy and guidance on sustainable tourism is available and known to key actors:

Information was sought under this indicator to try to identify what statutory guidance was available on sustainable tourism, and whether people in the industry both knew about it and were familiar with its contents.

- a) Strategic policy and guidance to The Northern Ireland Tourism Board and the tourism industry in Northern Ireland is mainly available in the form of the Blackwell Report - Tourism- A Sustainable Approach prepared for the Northern Ireland Tourist Board in 1992.
- b) An accessible attractive summary report and source of information on good practice in sustainable tourism was subsequently prepared in 1993 by the Northern Ireland Tourist Board and circulated within the industry. This document 'Tourism in Northern Ireland. A sustainable Approach' identifies the strategic need, the benefits and a set of practical steps towards sustainable tourism. At the time of publication it was widely accessible, but is now out of print.
- c) Development and funding strategies from Northern Ireland Tourist Board since 1992, have taken cognisance of elements of the Blackwell report, and a level of guidance can be said to have been provided to steer development priorities within the grant aid programmes. Special initiatives by NITB such as Sperrins Community Tourism Initiative and the South Armagh Tourism Initiative have been carried out on an action research basis and have included local capacity building in community and rural tourism, both of which have a strong relationship with sustainable tourism.
- d) Tourism legislation and accompanying regulations (Tourism (NI) Order 1992) can be considered to be a form of guidance on sustainable tourism, since it sets quality and registration levels consistent with good practice in providing tourist accommodation.
- e) NITB, the Environment and Heritage Service, Local Authorities and other statutory agencies have worked together on visitor and environmental management plans, access initiatives, or rural tourism development initiatives within the Mourne AONB¹, Strangford Lough Marine Nature Reserve and AONB areas, The Antrim Coast and Glens AONB and the Causeway Coast AONB and have provided guidance, programmes and professional development for key actors through these media.
- f) The Planning Strategy for Rural Northern Ireland contains specific policies on the development of tourism; and on the protection of natural resources for tourism and informal countryside recreation as follows:
 - i) _____

¹ Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. A landscape designation under the Nature Conservation and Amenity Lands (NI) Order 1985 (1989 Amended)

- i) Policy TOU1 to give favourable consideration to proposals for tourism development that are appropriate in terms of nature, scale and location.
 - ii) Policy TOU2 to protect key environmental assets for the tourist industry
 - iii) Policy REC4 To improve and extent the opportunities for the public to enjoy the countryside
 - iv) Policy REC5 Proposals for recreational development associated with watersports on lakes and waterways will be given favourable consideration where the development does not have an unacceptable impact on the amenity of the area or lead to water pollution
 - v) In relation to the coastline of the Causeway Initiative area Policy CO1 'the undeveloped coast' sets out to conserve the natural character and landscape of the undeveloped coast and Policy CO5 makes provision for the exceptional granting of permission to tourism development on the undeveloped coast where a coastal location is essential.
- g) The Planning Strategy also makes a wider range of references to tourism and related policies but those above represent those of most relevance to the Causeway Initiative and its role in promoting sustainable tourism and environmental management understanding and actions.
- h) Wales Tourist Board, Jersey Tourism, Scottish Tourist Board and the English Tourism Council have been proactive in the rest of the UK on tourism and environment issues and both publish information packs on issues such a greening tourism businesses, the importance of managing visitors to protected areas etc. Both organisations have web site materials capable of providing guidance to tourism businesses.
- i) Sustainable tourism is a topic of much interest and debate and this is reflected in the number of websites, journals, conferences and seminars on sustainable tourism. Key sources of information for the industry include Econett (mainly subscription) network website for businesses and researchers (www.greenglobe21.com/econett/html); the Scottish Tourism and Environment Forum (www.greentourism.org.uk) and academic journals.
- j) In Ireland under the last Operational Programme for Tourism 1994-1999, a tourism and environment challenge fund was available for sustainable tourism projects and initiatives. IRE2.4 million was available 22 projects were funded with grant aid of up to 75%. Projects ranged from visitor and environmental management actions to training and awareness and infrastructure projects. Bord Fáilte has made an evaluation report on effective practice within the project available to interested parties since September 2000.
- k) When asked within the key actor survey about their knowledge of strategic advice on sustainable tourism 66% were aware of strategic advice and could quote sources of guidance and information. Just under half of those who were aware of guidance were aware of the Blackwell report, the NITB's own policy guidance paper. No one mentioned the more accessible guidance that NITB had subsequently produced and people only quoted the Wales and Scottish Tourist Board advice where this had been provided through the Causeway Initiative in its early stages. Local Agenda 21 and Sustainable Northern Ireland Programme were also cited as providing sustainable tourism advice.

- l) No-one (except planning officers) referred to the Planning Strategy for Rural Northern Ireland or to local statutory development plans as a source of guidance or strategic advice on sustainable tourism
- m) Awareness of strategic advice on sustainable tourism was lowest amongst environmental organisations providing visitor opportunities, with only three out of 8 aware of any sustainable tourism advice. Where staff were aware of advice, sources quoted tended to relate primarily to the broader issues of sustainable development or to environmental management, rather than specific advice on sustainable tourism.
- n) Tourism businesses had received little guidance on sustainable tourism with just over a quarter of those responding to sustainable tourism questions in the survey being aware of having received any advice or guidance.

2) Strategic advice on environmental and visitor management:

This indicator seeks to establish the extent and nature of guidance of a strategic nature on visitor management and environmental management with relevance to the North East area. Examples of environmental and visitor management actions considered appropriate are listed in Appendix 5

- a) Strategic directions and priorities in terms of landscape management, nature conservation and built heritage interest in the North East area are indicated within the designation documents for the Causeway Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and the Antrim Coast and Glens AONB.
- b) It is likely that some of these directions will be developed within forthcoming statutory development plans for the North East area.
- c) Existing relevant strategic policies within the Planning Strategy for Rural Northern Ireland are set out as follows:
 - i) To protect rural landscapes from excessive or inappropriate development by the designation of Green belt and countryside policy areas.
 - ii) To protect the coast from inappropriate development
 - iii) To safeguard sites and features of nature conservation interest
 - iv) To protect the rural environment (environmental protection)
 - v) To maintain and enhance the rural landscape by encouraging the retention of tree and hedgerows, and through new planting initiatives
- d) Specific policies of relevance include:
 - i) Policy MIN1 - to assess the need for the mineral resource against the need to protect and conserve the environment
 - ii) Policy MIN2-to have regard to the visual implications of mineral extraction
 - iii) Policy REC 4- to improve and extend the opportunities for the public to enjoy the countryside
 - iv) Policy CON1-to prevent development which would adversely affect areas of nature conservation importance

- v) Policy CON2 - to pay due regard to nature conservation issues when considering proposals for development
 - vi) Policy Con 3 - to protect individual trees, groups of trees and woodland areas of particular importance because of their nature conservation value or contribution to the amenity of a particular locality.
 - vii) Policy CON 4 - to conserve the character of buildings listed as being of special architectural and historic interest
 - viii) Policy Con 5 - To preserve and where possible enhance the character and appearance of Conservation Areas (built heritage)
 - ix) Policy CON 6 -To safeguard features of the historic landscapes including archaeological sites and monuments and their settings.
 - x) Policy DES 1 - To carry out countryside assessments as part of the preparation of development plans
 - xi) Policy DES 4 - To require development proposals in Areas of Outstanding Natural beauty to be sensitive to the distinctive character of the area and the quality of their landscape, heritage and wildlife.
 - xii) Policy GB/CPA Designations of green belts and countryside policy areas through the development plan process.
 - xiii) Policy CO1-To conserve the natural character and landscape of the undeveloped coast.
 - xiv) Policy CO6 To resist proposals for new static caravan sites or chalet development for holiday purposes or the enlargement of existing facilities within the undeveloped coastal zone.
- e) The Planning Service issued Planning Policy Statement 2 - Planning and Nature Conservation in 1997. This statement gives a detailed breakdown of policy in relation to Nature Conservation, mainly in relation to designated nature conservation sites of national and international importance.
- f) Essentially the planning policies make a clear statement to developers about how planning applications will be treated within sites of importance for nature conservation.
- 3) Extent to which strategic advice on sustainable tourism and on visitor and environmental management addresses current issues in the Causeway Initiative area.**

This indicator is based on desk research on extent to which there is a match between the key issues for sustainable tourism and visitor and environmental management in the area, and the content of any advice on these topics available to people in the area

- a) Current issues in sustainable tourism² and visitor and environmental management in the Causeway Initiative Area may be summarised as follows:
- i) Limited access for visitors including limited footpath networks, cycle routes, lay-bys and viewing points.
 - ii) Opportunities presented by the landscape for activity tourism and the relative underdevelopment of this potential
- i) _____

² From A Framework for the Causeway Coast Annett 1997 and Visitor and Environmental Management Strategy ERM 2001

- iii) Congestion at some visitor sites whilst other attractions are underused
 - iv) Traffic congestion on some roads and in some car parks at peak times of year
 - v) Lack of signage to guide and particularly to distribute visitors throughout the area
 - vi) A focus by visitors and tour operators on the Giant's Causeway as the main site to visit in the area and a very short list of others including Bushmills Distillery, Dunluce and Carrick-a-Rede.
 - vii) A low visitor awareness of other opportunities and attractions in the area
 - viii) Short stays by visitors to the area
 - ix) Low awareness of community and other cultural events in the area.
 - x) Low participation by visitors in events run by the host communities and in cultural events in the area
 - xi) Limited provision of public transport, limited use of existing public transport and high incidence of car based visits
 - xii) Visual impacts on the coastal zone from new development.
 - xiii) Seasonality of tourism income
- b) These issues are addressed as follows in strategic guidance:
- i) NITB advice in the form of "Tourism in Northern Ireland, a sustainable approach" primarily addresses itself to the tourism business or developer. It covers issues such as: wise use of resources, recycling, reducing energy inputs or seeking cleaner forms of energy, location of development, avoidance of damage to the natural environment or to archaeological sites, and various ways of 'greening' the business and its supply chain. Wider strategic issues such as bathing water quality, involvement of local people, presentation of culture, conservation of built heritage, management of countryside, inland waterways and the coastline are referred to within a section "looking after the resource". This section is brief but does identify incidences of good practice in terms of resource management.
 - ii) The Blackwell Report prepared in 1992 for NITB sets out definitions of sustainable tourism, reviews practice elsewhere with clear examples, and examines the planning, provision and marketing in Northern Ireland in the light of issues and best practice elsewhere identifies strengths, weaknesses and makes recommendations for change. Although now out of date in the detail of sites, programmes and issues, the report covers all of the issues currently of relevance within the North East area and still provides a high level of insight and guidance for the way forward.
- c) It is fair to say that neither document provides direct guidance on issues or priorities for Regional Tourism Organisations and Councils in respect of their local areas, nor do they identify specific actions. Neither document is really accessible to the tourism industry (though the shorter guide has been in the past). There is in fact a distinct lack of available, locally relevant guidance on sustainable tourism. Many practical actions by NITB however, have focussed on providing sustainable products with a high level of involvement

from local people. (e.g. the activity product development and product marketing; some funding policies and priorities; engagement with Councils and Environment and Heritage Service in initiatives within AONB areas; the South Armagh and Sperrins Community Tourism Initiatives with IFI)

- d) Strategic planning policies identify the issues and identify in outline how development applications will be dealt with in particular circumstances. For example: the undeveloped coastline, within built heritage conservation areas, within or adjacent to ASSIs and European nature conservation sites.
- 4) **Extent to which people involved in tourism and visitor planning and delivery are aware of existence and content (key elements) of statutory and strategic advice.**

Having established the extent and nature of advice available to people it was then important to the baseline audit to establish people's awareness of the advice and its content. Questions of this nature were included in all surveys with results as follows:

- a) 47% of people interviewed during the key actor survey were aware of the Blackwell report and had some idea of its content.
- b) 42% of people interviewed during the key actor survey could express a definition of sustainable tourism that covered all three elements of sustainable tourism i.e environment, social and cultural, economic. A further 42% only mentioned two aspects and 14% only one. One person was not able to provide a meaningful definition. Of those that only mentioned one aspect the majority provided definitions with an environmental slant.
- c) Definitions of sustainable tourism by key actors included the following:

"Avoids negative impact on community, social cultural and environmental resource. Type of tourism that, long-term is green".

"Everyone gains, no-one loses, Goes beyond current funding measures and stands on own feet. Gives value to local people. Sense of something distinct to the area".

"Tourism that matches the nature of the resource and experience. Guarantees the unique nature of the place. Not a type or niche within tourism but a mainstream overall approach".

"Don't trample a site to death and kill it. Management of tourism and infrastructure to ensure that not only is there no damage but potential for positive benefits".

"Limiting our footprint on the planet. Important to ensure that limiting impact on the immediate area does not increase footprint elsewhere."

"Don't kill the goose that lays the golden egg. Interaction of economic, environmental and cultural is important not just the individual elements."

"Natural environment is the 'bread and butter' of tourism in the area."

"Need to maintain the resource since the area is increasingly dependent on tourism. All elements need to work together".

"Must develop only things that can sustain themselves economically"

"Activity is compatible with the culture, the natural heritage and the community. Brings financial returns for the community"

"Protection of sand dunes, reduction of pollution, reduction in use of cars, increase in cycling routes".

"Retains the resource for subsequent generations"

"Using sustainable transport as a means of travel, economically viable businesses, energy efficient premises."

"Protecting the environment. Economic benefits to be gained by maintaining environment. Attempts to attract people away from the honeypots."

"Making the area's natural assets available to everyone whilst preserving the environment"

"Renewable resources, green tourism. Planning that is in keeping with the natural environment"

"Identifying and realising opportunities for tourism that enhance its economic, environmental and cultural sustainability"

- d) In the survey tourism businesses were asked to score themselves on their level of understanding of sustainable tourism. The respondents were asked to rate their understanding of sustainable tourism on a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 indicates a full understanding. Just over 13% scored their understanding as full, with a total of just under two thirds scoring their understanding as average or above. Just under 20% recorded their understanding as low. Given however the subsequent examples provided by the businesses of their application of sustainable tourism it may be said that understanding is at best partial in terms of the definition of sustainable tourism used by the Causeway Initiative and within this study. Most definitions provided were environmentally based, however practical examples used were economic and related to elements of good practice such as discounting to increase length of stay and packaging and special offers for particular niche markets such as senior citizens at certain times of year.
- e) Recurring themes that appeared within the businesses' own definitions of sustainable tourism included:
- i) Energy saving
 - ii) Conserving natural resources
 - iii) Achieving all year round occupancy
 - iv) Stakeholders working together
 - v) Catering for the requirements of the visitors
 - vi) Protecting the environment
 - vii) Re-use of materials
 - viii) Maintaining employment
 - ix) Achieving and maintaining profitability.
- f) Tourism businesses provided the following definitions of sustainable tourism:

"Teaches and educates tourists"

"Saving energy"

"Use of natural resources to produce energy"

"Tourism that will last"

"What tourism is like on a regular basis"

"Look after/preserve a tourist attraction"

"Look after the tools of the trade, the natural attractions"

"Visitors every year"

"Full beds"

"Wide range of activities"

"Conserving and enhancing resources"

"Long term planning"

"Continuous trade all year round/ Repeat visits"

"A strategy drawing together all stakeholders including accommodation providers, entertainment, restaurant and shopping"

"To survive on the income of the business alone. No long term grants".

"Tourism generated by the environment, cultural landscape, and natural environment, and allows tourists to feel comfortable in the surroundings."

"Allowing tourists into areas of environmental/heritage importance without damaging the area"

"Promoting tourism that will keep up with the requirements of the visitors"

"Making the tourists' time enjoyable and memorable and accommodating them"

"A viable industry, taking account of the countryside. Ensuring that the natural character and beauty of the area are sustained and no activities are undertaken that will damage the countryside"

"Proactive marketing drives increasing awareness of the area"

"Attitudes of persons in the tourism industry"

"Provision of accommodation and amenities"

"Core areas are kept in place year after year by generating sufficient cash to maintain the operation"

"Sustaining a profitable level of tourism within a specific area"

"Income generates employment"

"Developing a business that can sustain itself using its own energy"

"Using materials that can be regenerated"

"Making use of local craftsmen and local materials"

"Integrate new developments in an environmentally sympathetic fashion"

"Full summer occupancy levels, or 50% average occupancy rates per annum"

"Putting in place initiatives that will be permanent"

"Tourism that is supported or strengthened over a long period of time"

"Not over providing tourism in the present so that future interests are not put at risk"

"Eco-friendly, energy efficient, low pollution"

"Annual events, conferences, cultural events, facilities such as a swimming pool, targeting specialist groups"

"Promoting and building on the natural resources/beauty spots"

"The management structure sets up a strategy to ensure that tourism in certain areas continues to grow and they have the foresight to know what needs to be done to effect it."

"Marketing by one source, not the three at present: NITB, CCAG, NISCA"

"Increasing standards"

"All groups accept their respective roles and responsibilities to gain the maximum contribution from the tourism industry"

"Tourism that will market the holiday experience and area by word of mouth when guests return home"

"The fabric of the tourism attraction must be protected from unmanaged, particularly high volume tourism"

"Maintain a high standard for visiting tourists"

"Offer a wide range of activities to attract tourists"

"Tourist Boards working in conjunction with other government bodies for the promotion of the tourism industry"

"Tourist providers are fully aware of peoples' needs and wants and new ideas to develop the tourism industry, make it flourish and consider the hopeful political situation that has developed"

- g) 55% of the tour operators in the survey of tour operators using the area could not define sustainable tourism. 15% gave a definition that covered all three aspects 25% two aspects and one respondent only one aspect.
- h) For the majority of tour operators surveyed sustainable tourism was an unfamiliar term and not one which they understood or had come across in their contacts with agencies in Northern Ireland. The following definitions were provided:

"small groups with small coaches, minimal travel, in depth study."

"Product which only exists because of tourists"

"No idea!"

"Good grief! The attraction itself, I suppose."

"To keep tours going"

"No Idea"

"Not sure"

"No Idea, Americans come to see scenery and look for their roots."

"Product with a lifetime customer demand"

"Attraction that continues to attract visitors"

"Repeat business and providing what the customer wants"

"One that helps the perception of Ireland as a green, pollution free country"

"A product with a lifespan, an innovative product of local value."

- i) 10% of communities responding to the survey provided a definition of sustainable tourism that covered all three aspects, environmental, economic, and social/cultural. 60% mentioned only one dimension and 20% two dimensions.
- j) Definitions of sustainable tourism provided by communities included:

"Creating a tourism initiative that is community led and owned with a genuine partnership with relevant statutory agencies within the catchment area".

"A form of tourism that does not damage the environment or the enjoyment of future generations"

"Green tourism. Tourism which is lasting and can repeat itself."

"Make best use of resources within the area and generate financial income"

"Permanent jobs for locals"

"Self-promoting, self-perpetuating projects which are capable of generating necessary funding to pay own way and also enable future development".

"Tourism initiatives able to resource themselves on an ongoing basis and provide economic development around whatever tourism themes develop".

"Tourism which pays for itself"

"Community representatives as equal partners"

"Organised to complement the environment"

"Development to the benefit of town or village"

- 5) **Extent to which people involved in tourism and visitor planning and delivery apply key elements of statutory and strategic advice.**

Having established the levels of awareness and understanding of sustainable tourism amongst key actors, communities and the tourism industry it was important in the baseline audit to assess the extent to which people had taken action to apply advice to their own situations. Results were as follows:

- a) People in the tour operator, key actor, tourism business and community surveys were asked if they had taken any actions towards implementing sustainable tourism, with results as follows:
- b) 70% of tour operators said that they applied sustainable tourism, examples of how they applied it included:
- i) following local advice on site,
 - ii) using knowledgeable guides (though most guides used were from outside the area and some from ROI or England)
 - iii) Ensuring that the product was at a high quality and would generate either repeat visits or word of mouth referrals.
- c) 85% of the key actors had implemented sustainable tourism advice in their activities including:

- i) On site management, solar panels, community involvement, meet needs of the community, maintain attractiveness of the resource.
- ii) Hill walking festival, environmental projects, Ballynahone *Magherafelt area*), Glenullin, Lough shores route ways (*Lough Neagh area*)³.
- iii) Siting of nature reserves. Choice of sites to purchase. Integrate tourism element to sustain income, interest and to assist people to place a value on sites.
- iv) Causeway Initiative, Mourne Heritage Trust, SCTI, South Armagh TI, Natural Resource Rural Tourism.
- v) Causeway Initiative, Giants Causeway Management
- vi) Wildlife habitats come before visitors on our reserves. Conservation priorities drive the access arrangements.
- vii) Environmental audit and statement for activities. Adopting 'Healthy Cities'
- viii) Encouraged hotels towards energy saving devices.
- ix) Blue Flag beach, Moyle Way, Causeway Coast Path, Waymarked Ways
- x) Putting together own sustainable tourism pack but is sourcing own materials. Energy efficiency guide. Bird counts at Benone, environmental impact assessment Benone 12 yrs ago. Developing leaflet on shells at Benone with a grant from the Causeway Initiative
- xi) Sustainable features in tourism marketing plan
- xii) Carnfunnock Country Park Development
- xiii) Developing a nature reserve in Whitehead.
- xiv) Avoiding PVC, using linoleum, thermal mass, and willow coppicing
- xv) Providing Local information, local festivals, cottages, local history talks, walks
- xvi) Informal recreation projects
- d) 60% out of the communities responding had implemented sustainable tourism in the following ways:
 - i) Developing an energy saving initiative
 - ii) Developing a conservation park
 - iii) Providing a Heritage Centre
 - iv) Providing a tourist hostel
 - v) Developing a dive centre, accommodation and camping barns
 - vi) Establishing a craft centre premises and links with local crafts people.
- e) Just under half of tourism businesses said they had implemented sustainable tourism measures and mentioned examples including:

"Recycling points" (4 businesses)

"Improvement of facilities and upgrading of rooms"

i) _____

³Some groups surveyed cover areas outwith the North East and mentioned their activities in other areas when asked about their activities in the NE.

"Consulted Bushmills Conservation Area Documents before developing"

"Incorporated the landscape car park with trees and gardens"

"Offered services free for pollution water sampling"

"Chemical management" (2 mentions)

"Tree planting"

"Zoning of river"

"Promotion/advertising in brochures, newspapers and within NITB centres"

"Our local authority strategy for development considers protecting and promoting the environment"

"Provision of a comprehensive folder of activities, events and restaurants, bus and train timetables" (3 mentions)

"Opened a farm shop with locally produced foods and crafts"

"Registered with NITB" (2 mentions)

"Being courteous to visitors and giving a "feel good factor"

"Providing personal attention" (2 mentions)

"Arranged golf seminars for Canadians"

"provided gifts"

"Installed timers on lights"

"Helped Canadians trace their roots, encouraging a return visit"

"Showing flexibility towards guests"

"Proactive advertising"

"Market research"

"Natural products used in the refurbishment of self-catering premises"

"Providing transport and guiding for the Causeway and cliff paths"

"Providing drying facilities" (2 mentions)

"Energy efficiency practices"

"Playground equipment from sustainable forests, all recyclable"

"Paper and tissues recycled"

"Posts for power points and signs recycled in a caravan park"

"Use of local craftsmen and materials"

"Buildings that are sympathetic to the countryside"

"Native trees and shrubs have been planted to encourage wildlife"

"Production of website"

"Landscaping and upgrading in the immediate environment"

"Member of the hospitable climates campaign for the "Energy Efficiency Best Practice Programme"

"As a guide, I ensure that no footprints or rubbish are left"

"Guides interpret without destroying the resource"

"Use public transport rather than cars"

"Establish a reed filter bed"

"Improve the quality of the water discharge"

"Bring our product directly to potential customers"

"Developed apartments, hotel and conference centre, entertainment facilities and holiday parks"

"Waste management undertaken"

"Creating an attractive amenity with walks"

- f) Just over half of the businesses that had not taken any actions towards sustainable tourism intended to do so in future.

6) Current practice in business planning:

This indicator is designed to establish the proportion of tourism businesses undertake business planning and marketing planning as one element of good practice in economic sustainability.

- a) Just under half of the tourism businesses responding to the survey had a business plan. Of those that had business plans 37.8% said that it was for 1 year, 13.5% said that it was for 2 years and 48.6% said that it was for 3 years or more. Just under two thirds of those businesses with a business plan included marketing within the plan and a similar proportion took sustainability issues into consideration.
- b) Effectively therefore less than one third of tourism businesses in the North East area have a marketing plan of any kind

7) Current practice in tourism marketing - e.g. level and purpose of use of images from sensitive areas, promotion of sensitive areas.

This indicator is designed to illuminate the current extent of use within marketing materials of images of sites that may not be able to stand the wear and tear of large numbers of visitors.

- a) The tourism literature review attempted to identify and review tourism literature available to visitors and potential visitors to the North East area. 12 brochures and 11 web sites were reviewed.
- b) One of the reviewing criteria was the extent to which sites that are sensitive to the impact of visitors were promoted through the brochures and web sites. Out of the 23 items of literature 15 (two thirds) promoted sensitive sites as places to visit.
- c) Just under half of the brochures and websites presented the area primarily as a natural resource tourism area with this being judged by both the content of the text and the images presented. 6 presented the area partially as a natural resource tourism area and partly as a general visitor destination whilst 6 did not give any precedence to natural aspects of the area.
- d) Most literature (17 out of 23) provided a basic or better approach to visitor management in the area through including maps of the distribution of visitor sites, recommended routes through the area, detail of cycle paths, or an attempt to spread visitors through the area.
- e) Most literature also (16 out of 23) mentioned the quality of the environment as being an important aspect of the area with water quality being the most mentioned along with Blue Flag beach status, and some mentions of nature reserves and built heritage conservation areas.

- f) Fears in previous reports that the Giant's Causeway may be over promoted and that tourism literature contributes to overcrowding at the site may be unfounded since although 15 out of 23 brochures or web sites mentioned the Causeway, 8 did not. Of those that mentioned the Causeway, 6 restricted themselves to one mention, 4 to two mentions, and 5 to 3 or more mentions. One web site gave the Giants Causeway 5 mentions.
- 8) **Extent of current teamwork between tourism agencies, visitor and accommodation providers, and bodies with responsibility for countryside, conservation and visitor management -**

To establish data against this indicator the number and nature of contacts between relevant agencies were assessed through an interview programme with key actors.

- a) Key actors regularly had contacts with a wide range of organisations in their roles within tourism and visitor and environmental management. On average organisations worked with nine others on a regular basis with the least number of organisations 5 and the most 15.
- b) The key actor survey asked people to identify the tourism networks they were involved in, and the extent to which they discussed sustainable tourism. Twenty networks were identified at different levels. The scope of the results was as follows:
- i) Causeway Coast and Glens Ltd. Regional Tourism Organisation (12)
 - ii) Belfast Lough Sea and Shore Partnership (3)
 - iii) Sperrins Tourism (2)
 - iv) Heritage Island,
 - v) World Heritage Site listing with UNESCO
 - vi) Coleraine Borough Council Strategy group
 - vii) Antrim Coast and Glens AONB Steering group
 - viii) CORE
 - ix) Sail Scotland,
 - x) Causeway Access and Recreation Group
 - xi) Border towns
 - xii) North-West Region cross-border group.
 - xiii) Countryside Access Forum.
 - xiv) Allways Ireland
 - xv) TIC network
 - xvi) Lower Bann Users Group
 - xvii) North Antrim Community Network
 - xviii) Countryside Access and Activities Network
 - xix) Ballymena Community Forum,
 - xx) Ballykeel Partnership
- c) 85% of key actors recorded that their networks discussed sustainable tourism issues with just over half reporting these discussions as regular.. The one that most frequently cited as discussing sustainable tourism was the Causeway Coast and Glens Ltd.

- d) Only 23% of key actors believed that other people in their network had the same view of sustainable tourism as they did. Differences cited included

"Some prioritise economic criteria, some environmental, no one pushing the cultural/community aspect".

"Some people do not want access based tourism"

"Others are development driven, think of economic sustainability".

"Emphasis on economic sustainability"

"Many others are tokenistic, not fundamental in their approach to sustainable tourism".

"Others often mean sustainability in the economic sense".

"Only the Causeway initiative discusses sustainable tourism. Different people have different views on what it means".

"Learning process particularly for private sector partners. Not aware of the importance of maintaining natural resource".

"Some people have studied sustainable tourism in depth, others only starting."

"Early days yet, Need to formulate strategies then the differences will be ironed out".

"There is common ground but everyone has own thoughts, different slants"

"Causeway Coast and Glens Ltd and the Causeway Initiative seem to be funding led not all organisations can get money for sustainable tourism actions".

"Tourism industry would put economic issues first"

"Communities see things differently from businesses and environmental organisations, Tourism marketing is living in the past"

"Some see it as a marketing issue - sustainable tourism as a niche market."

"Environmental considerations are missed out"

- 9) Nature, type and scope of information (e.g. website, brochure, tour operator) for visitors to the area and extent to which it addresses visitor and environmental management issues and promotes sustainable tourism activity.

This indicator provides information about how the area is presented to others and whether they receive information that would either engage their interest in the natural resource or enable them to contribute to its protection.

- a) The literature review addressed the extent to which the free literature and easily accessible web sites gave either interpretative information about nature conservation, landscape or earth science interest and provided information about the special sensitivity of sites and indications of responsible use.
- b) Whilst 17 out of 23 sources gave some information to assist visitor management and 16 some information on environmental quality very little detail was available to inform people and the treatment can be summarised as superficial.

c) Nature conservation and other important designations were mentioned within only 8 sources of information. This under represents this aspect of the area given its high quality and high levels of national and international designations. Designations were mentioned as follows:

i)	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty	3 mentions
ii)	Blue Flag Beach	4 mentions
iii)	Built heritage Conservation Areas	2 mentions
iv)	World Heritage Site	1 mention
v)	National Nature Reserve or Nature Reserve	3 mentions
vi)	Area of Special Scientific Interest	1 mention

d) Activities in the area were presented within the following number of sources of information as follows:

Hiking	14	Sailing	14
Cycling	9	Watersports	14
Angling	17	Festivals	8
Boat Trips	9	Golf	17
Horse-riding	12	Birdwatching	7
Diving	7	Game shooting	2
Cultural activities	10	Surfing	1
Arts and crafts	7	Rallysport	1

10) Current pattern of visits and extent to which visits are spread throughout the area.

This indicator identifies visitor numbers for the various attractions for which figures are routinely recorded and examines their geographical spread within the area.

a) Sites in the Causeway Coast and Glens area received the following numbers of visits in 1998, 1999 and 2000

Site or attraction	Visits 1998	Visits 1999	Visits 2000
Carnfunnock Country Park	128,040	148,526	162076
Glenarrif Forest Park	57,000	67,000	58500
Portglenone Forest Park	21,000	27,000	19100
Glenarm Castle Walled Garden	0	15,000	35000
Ballypatrick Forest Park	9,000	8,500	6800
Giants Causeway Visitor Centre	407,806	433,745	395247
Portstewart Strand	100,620	125,562	140000
Fantasy Island Portrush	103,000	92,000	90000*
Waterworld, Portrush	59,557	60,744	57236
Leslie Hill Heritage Farm Park	13,900	14,500	14000
Watertop Open Farm	7,500	8,000	7500
Patterson's Spade Mill	2,040	4,998	4557
Benvarden Estate	2,600	4,338	3860
Arthur Ancestral Home	1,606	1,658	2062

Causeway School Museum	2,269	2,206	2746
Carrickfergus gasworks	429	540	0
Morrow's Shop Museum	5,546	5,678	5706
Ballymoney Museum	1,840	2,758	2561
Movanagher Fish Farm	900	1,200	1600
Rathlin West Light Viewpoint	5,223	5,189	6135
Roe Valley Country Park	80,000	125,000	120000
Portrush Countryside Centre	42,000	40,000	42000
Stenson's Jewellery Glenarm	3,520	4,330	5000
Dunluce Castle	35,276	35,071	37320
Carrickfergus Castle	63,215	61,337	56356
Dunluce Centre	78,000	75,000	78000
Ballycastle Museum	1,414	6,000	6500
Knight Ride	23,565	23,359	20939
Old Bushmills Distillery	97,454	103,709	104608
Ecos Centre	0	0	16622
TOTAL VISITS	1,354,320	1,502,948	1,502,031
	average	45,144	50,098
		50,098	50,068

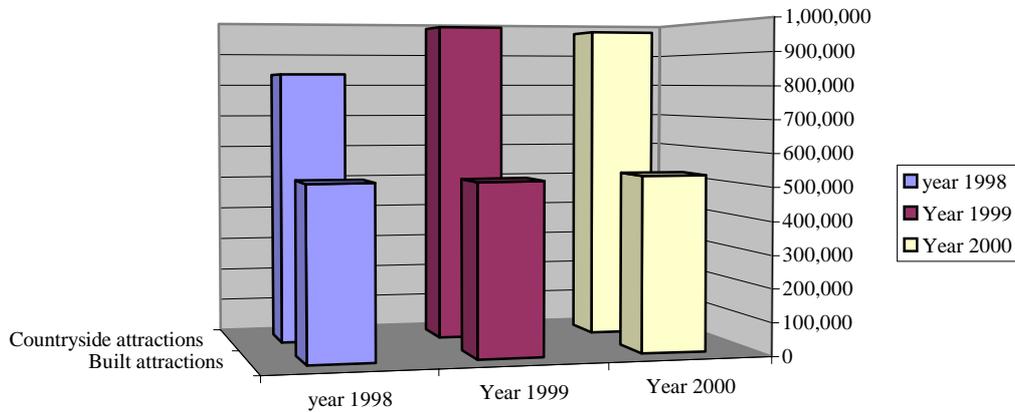
* estimate only for Fantasy Island, figure not available at 18/07/01

- b) Total recorded visits to attractions increased from a total of £1.35 million in 1998 to just over 1.5 million in 1999 estimates indicate that 2000 figures were slightly down on 1999 but still reached £1.5 million
- c) Visits to countryside attractions in the Causeway Coast and Glens area totalled some 996,060 in 1999 whilst visits to built attractions totalled 415,659. Visits to countryside attractions are increasing at many sites and as an overall figure whilst as an overall figure visits to built attractions are decreasing. Visits to countryside attractions⁴ accounted for 62% of all visits in 1998, 65% in 1999 and 65% in year 2000 whilst visits to built attractions accounted for 38%, 35% and 35% respectively.

i) _____

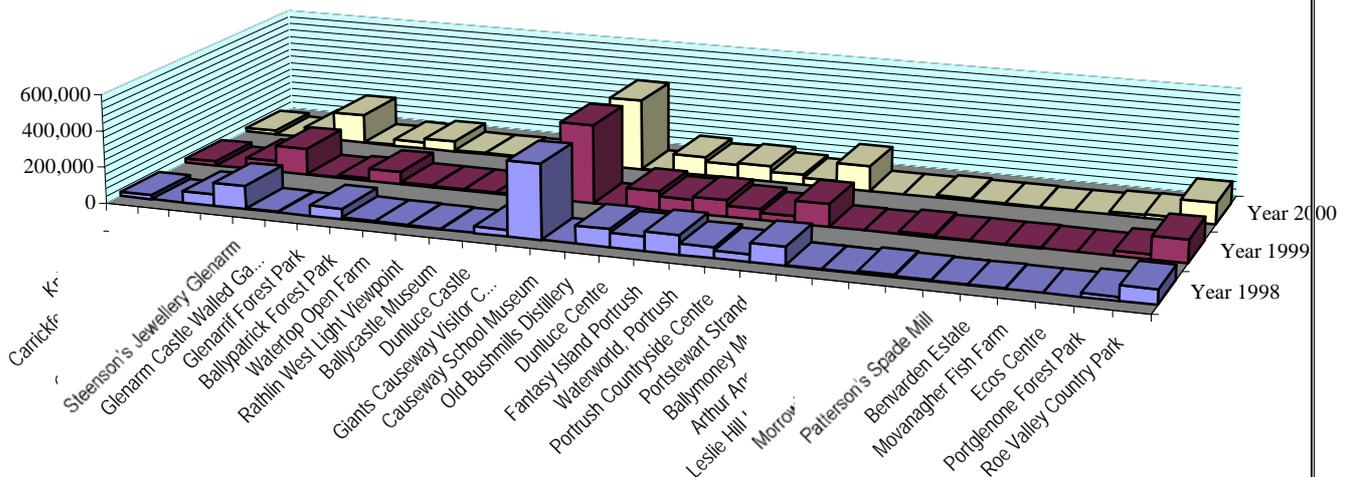
⁴ Countryside sites include visitor figures for the Giant's Causeway visitor centre as an indication of the numbers of people visiting the outdoor site. Giants' Causeway figures have not been included in the built attractions.

No of visitors to attractions Causeway Coast and Glens Area



- d) The majority of tour operators surveyed do not make high use of built attractions in the area. Exceptions are the Bushmills Distillery, castles such as Dunluce and Carrickfergus, and occasional visits to the Dunluce Centre.
- e) Tour operators surveyed used a very limited set of sites that included the Giant's Causeway, Dunluce Castle and the Bushmills Distillery and Carrick-a-Rede.
- f) There is a clustering of visits within the Giant's Causeway and Portrush area, whilst, in general terms visits are less dense to other parts of the area. Major countryside attractions such as forest and country parks create peaks of visits in areas such as Roe Valley and Carnfunnock.

Distribution of visits



- g) The average number of visits to sites in the area was 45,000 in 1998 and 50,000 in both 1999 and 2000.

- h) The Giant's Causeway was included in all tours by the tour operators surveyed, Bushmills Distillery in 90% of tours and Carrick-a-Rede, Dunluce Centre and Dunluce Castle in 40% of tours. The Antrim Coast Road was stated to be a part of 10% of tours, though operators are not fully aware of the pattern of use of the area by their fly-drive customers, so use may be greater.
- i) The average duration of tours into the area run by the tour operators surveyed was 1.5 days
- j) Statistics from the tourism business survey suggest that the average length of stay of the visitor is 2 nights, with 31.7% of the respondents detailing this number.
- k) Results from the visitor survey suggest that the majority of people stay between 1 and 3 nights. 13% said that they stayed 1 night, 12% said that they stayed 2 nights and 10.2% said that they stayed 3 nights.
- l) These results are similar to 1997 survey results which found that 40% of visitors were on a one day visit, 40% stayed for 2-3 days and 15% were on a 4-7 day visit. Short stays continue to predominate in the area.
- m) The System 3 Survey carried out on behalf of Causeway Coast and Glens Ltd in 1999-2000 found an average length of stay of 3.62 nights representing 58% of their stay in Northern Ireland.⁵
- n) Visitor patterns were illustrated by responses at the ten baseline visitor survey sites as follows:
 - i) People visiting Benone had also visited the following sites in order of frequency - Portrush, Giants Causeway, Limavady, Carrick-a-Rede.
 - ii) People visiting Carnfunnock were most likely only to visit that site. Where other sites were visited in conjunction with Carnfunnock, these were: the Coast Road, the Giant's Causeway and Portrush
 - iii) People visiting Carrickfergus Castle also visited the Knight Ride, Coast Road, Carrick-A Rede and the Giant's Causeway
 - iv) People visiting Dunluce Castle also visited the Giant's Causeway, Carrick-a-Rede, Bushmills, Portstewart and White Park Bay.
 - v) People visiting Glenarrif Forest Park also visited Carrick-a-Rede and the Giant's Causeway
 - vi) People visiting the Giant's Causeway also visited Carrick-a-Rede, Portrush, Ballintoy and Bushmills
 - vii) People visiting Patterson's Spade Mill did so mainly as a standalone visit. One visitor had combined a visit to Carrickfergus Castle with the Spade Mill and 9 with a visit to Portrush
 - viii) People visiting Drumaheglis also visited Portrush, Portstewart, Portballintrae and Ballymoney.
 - ix) People visiting the Ecos Centre also visited Portrush and Carrick-a-Rede
 - x) People visiting Rathlin Island mainly did so as a stand-alone visit though some visits to Carrick-a-Rede and to Ballintoy were made in association with Rathlin visits.

i) _____

⁵ System 3 1999-2000 Causeway Coast and Glens Visitor Survey. Data kindly provided for Causeway Initiative baseline purposes only by Causeway Coast and Glens Ltd.

- o) Those sites visited most frequently in combination with the Giant's Causeway were (in order of frequency) Dunluce Castle, Carrick-a-Rede Ballintoy, Bushmills Distillery, Glenarrif Forest Park, The Antrim Coast Road, Carrickfergus Castle, and Benone.
- p) The System 3 survey in 1999-2000 found that 74% of their sample would be visiting the Giants Causeway Visitor Centre during their stay, 61% the Bushmills Distillery, 40% Dunluce Castle, 35% the Carrick a Rede rope bridge and 40% the Coast Road. Only 3% would be visiting Rathlin Island.

11) Number of identified examples of sustainable tourism good practice in the area.

Good practice examples of sustainable tourism, when identified and well written up, are helpful in encouraging and signposting others. Good practice examples in place prior to the Causeway Initiative (though not written up) were as follows:

- a) The Causeway Coast And Glens Ltd (Regional Tourism Organisation) website (www.causewaycoastandglens.com) represents good practice in the range of information it provides on the area, and particularly in its inclusion of cultural and activity information and events in the area. The site presents the area as a whole rather than focussing on the Giant's Causeway and should contribute to achieving a level of visitor spread in the area.
- b) The management of the RSPB and Environment and Heritage Service site interests on Rathlin Island through community consultation meetings, local involvement and joint approaches to the employment of local staff represents good site management practice.
- c) The Rathlin Island brochure presenting the natural and cultural attractions of the island, its accommodation and services in a way that makes sense to both visitors and local people is a good example of community involvement in presenting their own area.
- d) Several private sector companies represent good practice in their efforts to develop low impact opportunities for visitors to be active and involved in the countryside. Such organisations are active in their attempts to bring people to the area for active rather than passive enjoyment and seek to provide opportunities for people to enjoy aspects of the countryside with local guides. Whilst such companies are relatively new and there are inevitable start-up difficulties in an area with short stays by visitors and low participation in activities, the pump priming efforts of these companies will be of great value to others in the longer term. Examples of such companies include Dalriada Ventures, Ulster Cycle Tours, and Emerald Trail. Local authorities in the area have provided development programmes and marketing support for potential activity providers and this also represents good practice.
- e) The National Trust, Moyle Council, EHS and the Northern Ireland Tourist Board demonstrated good practice in initiating the development of the Giant's Causeway Sustainable Management Strategy which examined the carrying capacity, quality and appropriateness of the site and its management and proposed sustainable actions. Useful research into visitor patterns and aspects of carrying capacity continues at the Giant's Causeway.

- f) The Glens of Antrim Local Historical Society represents good practice in its provision of local historical information to enhance the range and depth of information and interpretation materials available to visitors.
- g) The Antrim Glens Cottages is a community led project to renovate and restore derelict or empty traditional homesteads in the Antrim Glens area to provide tourist accommodation in the heart of the Glens and its communities; to protect these important landscape features and the tradition they represent; and to provide income for reinvestment in other community projects.
- h) Sperrins Hillwalking Festival, a joint community and Magherafelt District Council initiative to provide multi-day events for visitors based on the walking opportunities in the area. Prior to the Initiative the Sperrins were lightly used for walking, difficult to access and with little information and packaging. The Hillwalking Festival provides an orientation, accommodation, evening social events and a range of guided walks led by local hillwalking leaders.
- i) Auld Lammas Fair a traditional and well-known fair in Ballycastle that serves community needs and provides a visitor focus to encourage people to stay in the area. Local Authority support for fairs and festivals and the development of more dates in the fair and events calendar represent good practice by local communities and Councils working together to present the area in an authentic way.
- j) Antrim Camping Barns: Five Camping Barns have been developed within the North Antrim area. The Camping Barns provide simple, budget accommodation for walkers and cyclists within the area. Refurbishment schemes were considered together with new build. With new build schemes developers were encouraged to incorporate environmental best practice where possible. The five promoters have combined to form an Association for joint marketing purposes known as Antrim Camping Barns. The Camping Barns are the first of their type in Northern Ireland and have attracted considerable interest to date.
- k) Houston's Mill: Refurbishment of a Flax Mill as Community resource Centre, Self Catering, Industrial Heritage attraction and Horticultural business. Refurbished to a high standard by local community Association. The project has a strong environmental focus and illustrates good practice in its renovation of a vernacular building and in the way that both visitor and community needs are provided within one project.
- l) Craft Connection is an umbrella group for 40-50 working crafts people within the Co. Antrim area and further afield. The Connection has refurbished an existing retail building in the Ballycastle area to provide workshops, retail area and display space to create both a focus for presenting local crafts and to achieve economies of scale in the marketing and distribution of crafts.

12) Extent of availability and uptake of training and awareness raising opportunities for sustainable tourism.

With sustainable tourism an important area of professional practice it could be expected that people would have access to and would take up opportunities for continuous professional development of this aspect of their work. Opportunities for sustainable tourism training and take up of training were assessed within the study.

- a) No sustainable tourism training and development opportunities had been provided in the Causeway Initiative area prior to the start of the Causeway Initiative. Opportunities have been available on an occasional basis in England, Scotland and Wales in the form of conferences over the past ten years.
- b) The survey identified that only 28% of key actors had ever received any form of professional development in sustainable tourism and one third of the opportunities cited had been provided by the Causeway Initiative launch. The baseline figure is therefore 19%. Any professional development opportunities cited had been provided by the Sustainable Northern Ireland Programme and through the Sperrins Community Tourism Initiative.

13) Promotion of sustainable tourism in the area

Whilst much of the tourism that takes place in the North East area is sustainable, there is a need to ensure that, as tourism develops and more people become employed and active in tourism, a wider range of people understand the meaning of sustainable tourism and can apply this to their own activities. The key actor survey therefore sought to establish the extent to which their organisations were involved in furthering sustainable tourism and visitor and environmental management through their activities - with results as follows:

- a) 85% of the key actors identified that their organisation promoted sustainable tourism or visitor and environmental management in some way. If actions as a direct result of the Causeway Initiative are excluded then 71% of organisations could be said to have promoted sustainable tourism. The promotion activities people mentioned were as follows:

"Demonstration, and strategic approaches"

"Advice to communities"

"Influence Govt Departments and Councils. Show good practice models of environmentally sustainable tourism".

"Influence via letters of offer for grants, Blackwell Report, the yellow book, the organisation's environmental policy, we developed natural resource tourism measure in Peace II".

"Demonstration, funding leverage, policy statements, and direct protection of sites, management plans with landowners, funding of National Trust. Funding of countryside staff in Councils".

"The ECOS message"

"Energy saving initiatives"

"Management of litter, provision of correct type of walking routes and facility development".

"Just starting to as a result of the Causeway Initiative"

"As part of LA21"

"Advised others about the Causeway Initiative grant scheme"

"Helped B&B apply to Causeway Initiative"

"Encourage sustainable use among users e.g reinstatement if damage is done".

"Demonstration"

"Grant scheme information given out".

“Circulate information to communities, support groups in their projects to invite visitors”

“Providing advice”

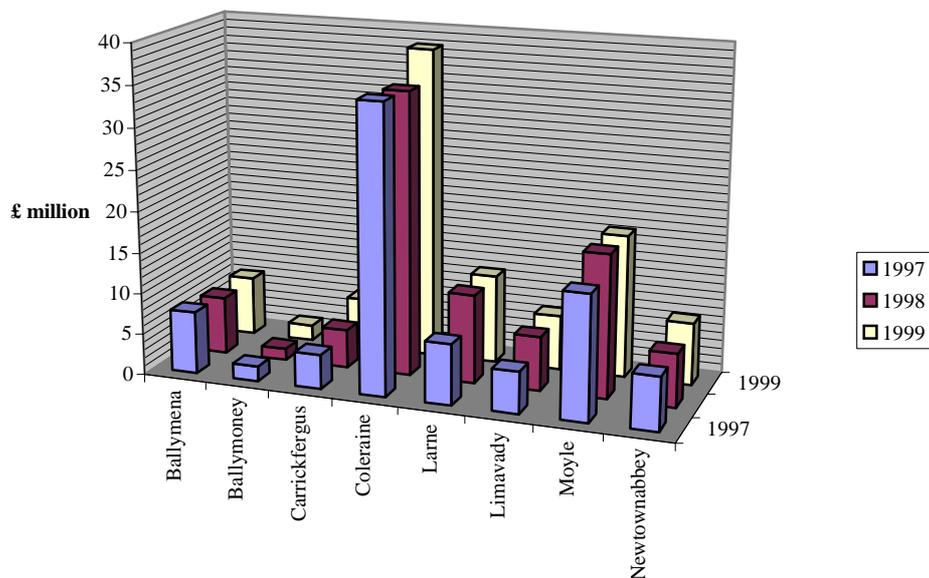
“Strategic planning to guide others”.

14) Levels of tourism income to the area, and distribution of income through the area.

Economic indicators are important in sustainable tourism, therefore a baseline estimate has been recorded for tourism income to the area as a whole and estimates of its distribution, by District Council area. Ideally this indicator would be more targeted and would deal with tourism income retained in the local economy. Data to identify this was not available.

- a) Tourism spend in the North East or Causeway Coast and Glens Area totalled an estimated £82.5 million in 1997, £88.8 million in 1998 and £95.6million in 1999, the latest year for which figures are available⁶. The North East area’s share in Northern Ireland’s overall tourism income was 29.7% in 1999.
- b) Data for the distribution of tourism income between local authority areas shows the Coleraine and Moyle areas benefiting most, and all Council areas experiencing increases year on year. The Council area with the lowest estimated tourism income is Ballymoney. Whilst there are clear reasons for this distribution pattern, including the location of popular seaside resorts and day visitor sites within Coleraine and the location of the Giant’s Causeway within the Moyle area, in both sustainable and rural tourism terms it would be desirable to see a higher level of income in some Council areas.

Amount and distribution of tourism income.



15) Visitor expenditure

i) _____

⁶NITB Local Authority Tourism Estimates 1999

- a) Average visitor spend in 1999-2000 for all Causeway Coast and Glens visitors was £34 This was slightly below the average for all regional tourism organisations of £35. Domestic visitors spent an average of £10 each whilst international visitors spent just over £40 per day.⁷

16) Employment in tourism

- a) Total estimated tourism employment, calculated as full time equivalent jobs as a proportion of tourism spend in the Causeway Coast and Glens area was 4454 in 1997; 4750 in 1998, and 5054 in 1999, a rising trend.

17) Number of Blue Flag beaches and Seaside Awards in the North East area

Numbers of blue flag beaches and Seaside awards identifies the extent to which, despite development, the waters and beaches remain safe to use from a water quality point of view for sea bathing and water recreation. Such indicators are an important if partial reassurance that tourism development activity is environmentally sustainable, and that the potential for water based activities may be realised.

Blue Flag beaches must comply with both the EU Bathing Water directive guideline standards for microbiological and physico-chemical parameters, and with the Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive.

Seaside Awards are give to applicant sites that meet the EU Bathing Waters Directive mandatory standards for micro-biological parameters. Beaches may be categorised 'resort' or 'rural'.

Both awards have broadly similar criteria for inspection, facilities and safety.

- a) 4 European Blue Flag Beach Awards were made in the North East area for 2000 and 2001 as follows
- i) Portrush East Strand
 - ii) Portstewart Strand
 - iii) Benone Strand
 - iv) Portrush West Strand
- b) Seaside Awards were made to 5 beaches in the area for the 2001 season as follows:
- i) Benone Strand
 - ii) Ballycastle
 - iii) Portrush West Strand
 - iv) Portrush East Strand
 - v) Portstewart Strand
- c) All beaches gaining the seaside award met the 'resort' criteria. No beaches were listed under 'rural' criteria.
- d) Ballycastle Marina and Carrickfergus Marina gained Blue Flag marina status in 2001.
- e) No inland waters have been tested for Blue Flag status, but it is desirable that busy watersports sites such as Drumaheglis, Coleraine Marina and Newferry should be.
- i) _____

⁷ System 3 1999-2000 Causeway Coast and Glens Visitor Survey

- f) This is an important area of benchmarking for the North East area. Its traditional holiday activity has been based on beaches and this remains important particularly for the domestic holiday market. Benone Beach was the first Blue Flag designation in Northern Ireland and has maintained its status for the past 12 years. People are increasingly discerning in environmental matters and water quality is of particular interest for bathers. The North East has the potential to increase the numbers of both Blue Flag and particularly Seaside Awards for a wider range of beaches. The opportunities for activity development, including watersports development, mean that it is desirable that people taking up contact watersports in the area have the reassurance that they are unlikely to become ill as a result. It is therefore important that as well as extending Blue Flag and Seaside Award activity in the area, consideration is given to ensuring that contact watersports sites such as the Bann Estuary, Drumaheglis, Newferry, Cushendall, and popular dive sites such as The Gobbins and Rathlin Island should also achieve the standards of the EU. Bathing Water Quality Directive

ENVIRONMENT AND VISITOR MANAGEMENT INDICATORS:

18) Number of countryside sites that have appropriate environmental and visitor management planning and actions in place, or in development.

Good environmental and visitor management at site level ensures both that important aspects of the natural resource are managed, and that where there is pressure on a site it is noticed and there is an opportunity to take remedial action. The following situation prevails in relation to site level management.

- a) Limavady Borough Council staff manage the beach and dune land at Benone. This area was designated a local nature reserve in 1988 There is a management plan for the area which is due to be updated.
- b) Limavady BC has also been involved in the development of the Magilligan Joint Working Group established to look at more strategic and integrated approach to the conservation and management of the Magilligan ASSI/cSAC. This group has representation from Environment and Heritage Service, Ulster Wildlife Trust, Ministry of Defence, and both Coleraine and Limavady Borough Councils.
- c) The National Trust owns some 19 properties in the area including:
 - i) Downhill
 - ii) Mussenden Temple
 - iii) Avish/Gortmore
 - iv) Rough Fort
 - v) Portstewart Strand
 - vi) Bar Mouth (River Bann)
 - vii) Grangemore Dunes
 - viii) Giants Causeway
 - ix) North Antrim Cliff Path
 - x) Dunseverick Castle
 - xi) Whitepark Bay
 - xii) Carrick-a- Rede
 - xiii) Larrybane
 - xiv) Fair Head
 - xv) Murlough Bay
 - xvi) Cushleake Mountain
 - xvii) Cushendun
 - xviii) Ballyconagan
 - xix) Manor House (Rathlin Island)
- d) All of the sites have management plans and are managed in a way that protects and enhances their nature conservation interest. Nature conservation and visitor management mechanisms to secure nature

conservation interest are overseen by a conservation advisor at Northern Ireland level.

- e) The National Trust's Giant's Causeway Site has a sustainable management plan and is in the process of developing a World Heritage Site management plan, which will include conservation monitoring.
- f) The Trust also has plans to develop an environmental and visitor management plan for Portstewart Strand, though this is not yet in place or in preparation.
- g) RSPB undertakes regular species and habitat monitoring on its own lands on Rathlin Island and undertakes monitoring work under contract for Environment and Heritage Service. Rathlin West Light Viewpoint is managed by RSPB.
- h) All ASSI sites in the area are subject to conservation monitoring by EHS on a quarterly basis.
- i) EHS directly manages natural heritage sites at Garry Bog, Kinramer on Rathlin, Clandonagh Bog and the White Rocks. A wide range of built heritage sites are also managed through EHS regional operations based at Roe Valley in Limavady including the grounds of Dunluce Castle and Carrickfergus Castle. The maintenance of the structures is carried out through EHS Built Heritage in Belfast.
- j) EHS, through its Countryside and Coast section within the Natural Heritage directorate promotes and provides funds for visitor and environmental management in the area, for access to the countryside and for information and interpretation materials.
- k) EHS has also provided the resource and momentum for the preparation of a comprehensive set of landscape character areas within the area to be used in statutory development planning and to guide activities such as the assessment of visual impact of development: and peoples understanding of landscape elements.
- l) Moyle District Council carries out environmental management activities around the Giants Causeway Visitor Centre site, at Waterfoot Beach, Dunseverick Harbour, Runkerry Sand Dunes, Portbradden, Portaneevy Viewpoint and Picnic Area, Kinbane Castle Car Park and access point, Ballycastle Marina, The Moyle Way, The Tow River path, Cushendun Car park, Layde Cliff Path, Cushendall Beach, Legg Green, Limerick Point, Waterford, Waterfoot beach and hinterland, Cushendall River Walk, Glenarrif River Walk, Ardclinis, Coolmaghra, and at Ballycastle Beach and Seafront.
- m) Ballymena Borough Council undertakes environmental management activities at the Ecos Millennium Centre, on the Borough's riverside paths, on its public footpath and visitor facilities at Slemish and at Portglenone Marina. It also manages access to the River Bann for water-skiing at Newferry
- n) Newtownabbey Borough Council has purchased significant areas of Carnmoney Hill to protect the area from development and in time to provide country park type facilities for ratepayers and their visitors.
- o) Ballymoney Borough Council manages a riverside caravan site and small area of woodland at Drumaheglis, provides a slipway and manages access and zoning for water-skiing. The Council has also been a participant in

promoting and managing the repair of erosion on the riverbanks along the water ski zone, through regeneration of the natural riverbank vegetation.

- p) Coleraine Borough Council manages watersports at its Coleraine marina and convenes a forum to review management arrangements annually, particularly in respect of fast-powered craft. The Council also manages visitor access and parking at The White Rocks and two Blue Flag beaches at Portrush.
- q) Ballymena, Antrim, Coleraine, Ballymoney and Magherafelt Borough Councils jointly manage aspects of recreation on the Lower Bann River including a registration scheme for boat users and a co-ordinated approach to management and signage for visitors. Waterways Ireland has taken over as navigation authority from the Rivers Agency and will be responsible for signage, maintenance of the navigation and providing and maintaining locks. In the short term Rivers Agency will continue provision of these services under service level agreement.
- r) Northern Ireland Forest Service manages some 30 forests within the area, including two popular forest parks at Glenarrif and Portglenone, and a forest drive at Ballypatrick. Increasingly the Forest Service enhances the wildlife and landscape value of its forests. Several of the forests contain nature reserves and some ASSI sites including the Breen Wood. Forest Service works with Councils to enhance facilities for recreation e.g., current development of off road cycling trails in Limavady Borough Council area.
- s) The Ulster Wildlife Trust has 7 nature reserves within the area. These are directly managed for their nature conservation interest and actual and potential biodiversity by the Trust. As resources allow the Trust is making arrangements for sustainable visits to be made to the sites. UWT nature reserves in the area are as follows:
 - i) The Umbra- at Benone
 - ii) Glendun Farm
 - iii) Straidkilly
 - iv) Glenarm
 - v) Feystown
 - vi) Isle of Muck
 - vii) Ecos Centre grounds
- t) All of these visitor and environmental management activities are currently un-coordinated with agencies working to different agendas and priorities, except where sites are of ASSI, SPA or SAC status where management objectives are agreed by EHS with site managers and where changes in use or management regimes must be agreed in advance.
- u) At present there is no blue print for good practice in visitor or environmental management though there is some consensus between environmental bodies on nature conservation management. Bodies without specific knowledge of nature conservation have little access to advice. Bodies in the area receive little advice on visitor management.

19) Number of sites with basic or more advanced interpretation of the natural, built, cultural or archaeological interest.

Visitors who enjoy countryside visits often want to know more about their surroundings, e.g. the habitats, species, local history and archaeology. Access

to this type of information for visitors to sites was assessed during the baseline audit and the following site-based interpretation identified.

- a) The following sites in the area currently have basic or more advanced interpretation of the natural, cultural, built heritage or archaeological interest. There are currently some 50 locations with information as follows:
- i) Benone Leaflets on shells of interest in the area (two information panels being provided through Causeway Initiative funding)
 - ii) Downhill/Mussenden Temple - panels at Lions Gate (map of the estate), Bishop's Gate, Downhill Castle, Palace, Dove Cote and Ice House describing former uses of the features and including photographs of former uses. Panel at the Black Glen detailing wildlife on the pond.
 - iii) Bar Mouth (River Bann) bird hide but no interpretation.
 - iv) Portstewart - Panel, detailing coastal path, interest of the beach and dunes, the archaeology within the area and the Minke whale washed up on the beach some time ago.
 - v) Portrush Countryside Centre - displays on marine interest of the area, fossils, nature conservation interest, guided walks and talks.
 - vi) Dunluce Centre - indoor displays on natural, cultural and historical aspects of the area.
 - vii) Dunluce Castle (information boards on site, literature available in shop, guided visits)
 - viii) Giant's Causeway (Audio visual, paths panel, leaflet available, on-site guides by arrangement)
 - ix) Dunseverick- Causeway Coast Path information
 - x) Carrick-a-Rede - Paths information, information about the nets and the fishery.
 - xi) Ballintoy Harbour -large interpretative panel
 - xii) Portaneevy -Large interpretative panel
 - xiii) Kenbane - EHS panel about the castle and geology.
 - xiv) Ballycastle , North St. viewpoint panel
 - xv) Ballycastle - one small, one large interpretative panel
 - xvi) Ballycastle Pans Rocks - Small information panel and viewpoint information
 - xvii) Ballycastle- Marconi information panel and viewpoint board.
 - xviii) Coolanlough - Fair Head- AONB panel
 - xix) Murlough Bay - AONB panel, viewfinder, Information panel
 - xx) Torr Head - small information panel
 - xxi) Greenhill viewpoint
 - xxii) Coolraney viewpoint
 - xxiii) Cushendun- large interpretative panel
 - xxiv) Glendun-small information panel

- xxv) Layde-small information panel
 - xxvi) Cushendall 3 panels 1 large and two small.
 - xxvii) Waterfoot - 3 panels - two large, onesmall.
 - xxviii) Ardclinis Viewpoint panel.
 - xxix) Ecos centre - interpretation of site, nest box camera.
 - xxx) Cushendun -panel in tea-room showing sites in the area
 - xxxi) Glenarrif - wildlife interpretative room.
 - xxxii) Rathlin Island - Large interpretative panel, Panels in preparation for Kelp Store and Guest House. Leaflet about Ballycorrigan.
 - xxxiii) Straidkilly Nature Reserve nr Carnlough - Information Board
 - xxxiv) Glenarm Nature Reserve -information board
 - xxxv) Roe Valley Country Park - Interpretation of the nature conservation interest and history of the park and its features. Small museum.
 - xxxvi) Carnfunnock - displays of local information, nature conservation interest.
 - xxxvii) Isle of Muck -information board
 - xxxviii) Glendun Hill Farm Nature Reserve - information Board
 - xxxix) Carrickfergus Castle- displays on history and former uses of the castle, harbour and walled town
 - xl) Knight Ride - presentation of the history of Carrickfergus
 - xli) Banagher Glen -panels throughout the site detailing features, habitats and species of interest.
- b) In general terms the quality of interpretation is high though in some areas the nature conservation interest presented is the obvious, rather than the rare and interesting.
 - c) The interpretation is mainly distributed around the coast, with limited information in the 'interior' of the area.
 - d) There is very little interpretation of the upland interest of the area.
 - e) The Causeway Coast and Antrim Coast and Glens Interpretative strategies have assisted in raising the frequency and quality of interpretation and have ensured good practice in providing a 'house style' for parts of the North East area.
 - f) Although the sites listed represent valuable access for visitors and local people to information on the natural and cultural resource, the sites are not linked or jointly presented in any way and visitors do not know in advance whether sites will provide interpretation.
 - g) Interpretation in Moyle District Council area won Interpretative Ireland's Heritage Award.

20) Extent to which visitors are informed of the natural interest and sensitivities of countryside sites in the area.

Part of the protection of the natural resource lies in the extent to which visitors are provided with information that encourages them to value the site and to behave there in appropriate ways. This indicator assesses the information available.

- a) Around half of the sites listed above present information about the nature conservation interest of the site or the area.
- b) Of the information reviewed in the preparation of this baseline, very little information guided visitor behaviour. Exceptions are within panels on Blue Flag beaches in relation to dune and beach management.
- c) Almost all tour operators using the area felt that current literature available about the area's natural heritage sites promoted responsible use by visitors and tour operators. (a surprising finding in the light of the literature review) They felt that sufficient information was available at the time of the survey (via their guides) but would always like more and this would be passed on to visitors within the tour itinerary.
- d) The literature review identified that tourist and visitor information contains little information of any depth on the nature conservation interest of the area - a typical text might read: "birdwatchers will find Rathlin Island of interest" and then move on to another topic without giving any information about species or the season when the island is of interest. Where interest is identified it mostly terrestrial with the marine interest of the area being poorly presented. Whilst site based literature with detail has been printed in some cases, it is often available on site only and is not available to guide choice of visit, choice of area or choice of sites to visit in conjunction.
- e) The visitor survey identified that Just over half of visitors were aware of protected area designations or areas of nature conservation in the North East. Areas that they named as protected areas or nature conservation areas were as follows: (numbers refer to numbers of people mentioning the site or designation)

Ballycastle	1	Forest Parks	5
Bann Estuary	1	Glenariff	2
Bird Sanctuary	5	Glens of Antrim	10
Blue Flag Beach	2	Greenhill	1
Bushmills	1	Keeble	2
Carnfunnock	2	Magilligan	1
Carrick-a-Rede	6	Murlough Bay	2
Causeway	99	Mussenden	1
Coast Road	11	Portstewart	1
Cushendall	2	Rathlin	23
Cushendun	1	Torr Head	1
Dunluce Castle	1	Umbra Nature Reserve	2
ECOS	1	White Park Bay	5

- f) Sites with highest recognition were the Giant's Causeway with just under one quarter of visitors aware that it has a protective designation and Rathlin Island 5.6% of visitors. Some sites that do not have protective designations were mentioned within the list and other important sites omitted, illustrating a low awareness of this aspect of a visit to the North East area.
- g) Only a quarter of visitors surveyed in the visitor survey had received information of any kind on the natural heritage of the area. Information

received included booklets, brochures, map guides, information from guides, signs and information from the tourist office.

- h) Looking at visitors in receipt of information on a site-by-site basis the following pattern was evident. Almost half of visitors to Benone reported that they had received information on the natural heritage, whilst 40% of those visiting Rathlin Island had done so. Fewer people visiting the Giant's Causeway had received information about the natural heritage (9%) than at any other site. Performance at each site was as follows:

Site	Received info.	% received
Benone	25	48%
Carnfunnock	11	26%
Carrickfergus Castle	9	19%
Dunluce Castle	19	30%
Glenarrif	5	12%
Giant's Causeway	7	9%
Patterson's Spade Mill	1	Not valid
Drumaheglis	5	27%
Ecos Centre	13	32%
Rathlin Island	6	40%

21) Amount of money spent on environmental management in relation to visited countryside sites in the area.

Environmental management in natural resource tourism areas may be regarded as a process of maintaining a capital community asset. Effort in environmental management may crudely be assessed through identifying the amount of money spent on the activity.

- a) Local authorities⁸, the National Trust, Ulster Wildlife Trust, RSPB, Forest Service and Environment and Heritage Service were asked during the key actor survey and follow up questions, about their expenditure on visitor and environmental management in the area. The total expenditure reported in financial year 2000-2001 was £3 million

22) Ratio of area tourism income to expenditure on management of the natural resource for tourism.

If the natural resource is to be considered as a tourism asset in addition to its own intrinsic value and its biodiversity value then there should be some relationship between income from visitors (as an indicator of visitor activity) and the amount reinvested in visitor and environmental management. No research appears to be available from elsewhere on an ideal relationship between tourism income and expenditure on visitor and environmental management and no ideal ratio is suggested here. It may be recommended however that as visitor activity in the countryside increases, so should activity on visitor and environmental management. The level of visitor and environmental management at present is not considered to be sufficient by most parties so the ratio might also be expected to 'improve' i.e. that the expenditure on management would increase in relation to tourism income.

i) _____

⁸ Two local authorities provided full information about expenditure. The remainder of local authority spend is based on an estimated £250,000 expenditure per annum.

- a) Expenditure by tourists in the Causeway Initiative area was estimated to be Some £95.6 million in 1999
- b) Expenditure by managing bodies on visitor and environmental management in their last full financial year is estimated to be in the order of £3m⁹
- c) The ratio of tourism income to visitor and environmental management spend in the area is therefore in the order of 32:1
- d) Except within local authorities, there is no current connection between visitor activity and consequent income to the area and the money spent on environmental management. Indeed a proportion of the expenditure is undertaken by conservation charities with fundraising activities outside the area.

23) Environmental management actions within the wider landscape:

In addition to environmental management at visited sites some further environmental management activity takes place within the broader area as follows:

- a) The Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD), through its ESA and Countryside Management Scheme, promotes environmentally friendly farming within parts of the Causeway Initiative area.
- b) In the 1980s the Antrim Coast Glens and Rathlin Environmentally Sensitive Area was designated. Farmers were invited to apply. All farmers accepted within the scheme entered into management agreements with DARD in relation to the types of habitat on the farm, maintaining wildlife interest, maintaining and enhancing traditional buildings, archaeological monuments and traditional field boundaries.
- c) By 2001 some 77%¹⁰ of eligible farmers in the ESA area had signed up and were operating to DARD prescriptions
 - i) 26,809 hectares of land were under ESA agreement
 - ii) The total amount of grant aid paid out since 1993 had reached £3.97 million

i) _____

⁹This sum is based on recurrent expenditure on the following activities by EHS, UWT, NT, RSPB, Forest Service and the eight local authorities, it excludes expenditure by Roads Service, DARD and Planning Service in their roles within environmental and visitor management. Management activities included in the sum are as follows :

Environmental management: Managing sites and landscapes to retain and enhance their natural interest or quality; management of water quality for bathing and for nature conservation; management of specific sites to maintain their nature conservation interest: Ensuring that where visitors are invited to sites that are important for nature conservation their impacts are minimised through effective routing and information.

Visitor Management: Mechanisms of ensuring that the visitor experience of an area is maximised whilst also maintaining the natural, built and cultural heritage interest; Effective route signing to enable people to find attractions easily, to ensure that visitors park appropriately, to ensure that visitors are aware of public transport opportunities; Parking and lay-by opportunities to allow people to stop at places of scenic beauty. Effective on-site signing so that visitors can find main amenities, are aware of paths and designations, know how to use the site safely and responsibly; Provision of information so that people can gain an understanding of the special interest of the area or site. Provision of opportunities for people to have a more informed experience of sites through using guides; Clearance of litter and restoration of removed or broken signs and facilities; Provision of services such as toilets at appropriate locations. Mechanisms to manage traffic flows at peak times.

¹⁰ One of the highest rates of participation within ESAs in Northern Ireland.

- iii) 38 km. field boundaries had been restored
 - iv) 1653 hectares of heather moorland were under management agreement
 - v) 110 hectares of species rich grassland were under ESA management
 - vi) 517 hectares of broadleaved woodland were under ESA management
 - vii) 740 traditional farm buildings had been restored
 - viii) 111 historic sites had been protected and managed.
- d) Evaluation work on the impacts of ESAs on the environment and the landscape identifies that they are effective at present in preventing a degradation of habitat and landscape on participant farms. Levels of funding for enhancement, and levels of application for enhancement work make improvement or enhancement a more difficult target.
- e) At present participant farmers receive little feedback from DARD staff on the progress of nature conservation objectives on their farms, due to limited resources for monitoring.
- f) Although all farmers in the area may apply for the Countryside Management Scheme this is in the early stages of preparing management agreements and no agreements were in place at the stage the Causeway Initiative commenced and no money had been spent.
- g) The Planning Service manages aspects of the landscape through its development planning and development control functions. This activity, apart from setting down strategic policies to guide development, mainly takes the form of guidance on siting and design of dwellings and developments, and refusing or imposing conditions where applications are deemed unsuitable. Data was sought about the number of applications refused within the Antrim Coast and Glens and Causeway Coast AONBs in 2000/2001, but was not forthcoming.
- h) Environment and Heritage Service have recently completed the preparation of landscape character areas for the whole of Northern Ireland to guide themselves and other agencies on issues such as development planning, landscape management, the carrying capacity of different landscapes for development, key views and features, key elements of local character etc. This is now available as a landscape management tool.
- i) Environment and Heritage Service also has a remit for monitoring and regulating water quality in rivers and along the coastline in the North East area through licensing discharge consents, monitoring discharges, and through general water quality monitoring.

24) Levels of awareness of arrangements for visitor and environmental management in the area:

Whilst considerable effort goes in at site level and some effort goes in at area level to manage visitors and to maintain environmental quality, it is also important that people in tourism businesses, communities and key agencies are aware of the nature and extent of such effort. The following data emerged during the baseline audit:

- a) 60% of communities were not aware of current arrangements for visitor and environmental management whilst the remaining 40% felt that current arrangements were inadequate.
- b) Main inadequacies cited were:

"Poor signing, provision of passing places, litter and waste management, and public transport"

"The Giant's Causeway is collapsing, Visitors are not encouraged to stop in local towns, advice about whole area is poor".

"There is not enough signage, but what is there are eyesores. Viewpoints and picnic areas are required".

"Not enough money set aside for cleaning beaches and other public areas"

- c) In response to a question to key actors about whether visitor and environmental management in the Causeway Coast and Glens area is adequate just under 10% people thought that it was. The remaining 90% highlighted the following inadequacies:

"Insufficient green transport, car parking, litter, scrambling on dunes, education needed locally about site sensitivities".

"Poor co-ordination of festivals; continuation and increase in intensity of sand extraction in Lough Neagh, Peat extraction at 'Bulrush Peat' continues beside River Bann. Environmental and visitor management not happening".

"Visitors need to be spread thinner, currently at the honeypots. More sites for people to visit. Restrict access to some of the prominent sites to reduce pressure and spread the load. Management policies are lowering quality and remoteness at present in an effort to make everything robust. Great Barrier Reef an example of good practice".

"Signing is poor. Information on the natural heritage is poor and the wider range of what to see and do, outside the immediate Causeway Coast and Glens area is also needed."

"There is not enough co-ordination, no joint agenda, AONBs used to have an identity but now the RTO are predominates".

"Arrangements are OK at present but: spatial planning for tourism accommodation is an important (and missing) part of the picture, it needs to be located where there is minimal visual and environmental impact. Lay by and viewpoint facilities need improvement. Important to plan now for future increased pressure".

"Better management of Giant's Causeway is required. There is no people management, no benches, congestion, people all over stones etc. No local gain from the Causeway".

"No visitor and environmental management is in place"

"Totally inadequate. Formation of a body to co-ordinate and integrate a strategy is required."

"Limited parking, lack of public transport, car pollution, Low awareness of Blue Flag beach status"

"Awareness and education of the public and operators very important. Need to know what to do at local level."

"Early recognition of principle 'Stop killing the goose that lays the golden egg' Proper management of bog land. Some amenities under used and some over-used".

"More signage, environmental element in visitor info. TIC¹¹s and TIPs should illustrate the value of environment"

"At a site level visitor and environmental management is very important. At an area level it is not very important. Coast road signage is inadequate, family cycling in forests, joined up routes. Everyone is doing their own thing at present."

"Environmental management low on everyone's agenda. Hotels do not even consider it."

"Visitors are left to fend for themselves. More car parking required. People should not be allowed to walk on rocks at the Causeway"

"There isn't really any visitor and environmental management. Lots is done at community level but things like signage, places to stop and looking after sites is missing"

"Not quite adequate yet but getting there"

"Signage policy increases pressure on main attractions and starves the rest. Facilities such as toilets, lay-bys and information needed for tourists"

"More literature needed on best practice. More customer surveys on performance"

- d) 60% of communities were unaware of current visitor and environmental management arrangements
- e) 14% of key actors were unaware of arrangements for visitor and environmental management in the area.
- f) Less than one third of tourism businesses were aware of current arrangements for visitor and environmental management, though more than 95% felt that this activity was either very important (90%) or important (5.4%) The remainder felt it was quite important.
- g) Businesses were also asked to score how effective that they felt that the current arrangements for the management of the natural resources of the Causeway Coast and Glens area were. On a scale of 1-5 with 1 being the least effective. 75% scored arrangements at 3 or less. The main inefficiencies mentioned were that existing planning policies were not implemented effectively, and that a review of planning policies, strategies and implementation was required in order to prevent unsuitable new mass developments in the area. Other main issues included: No recycling facilities in Moyle District Council, more public education and awareness required on the issue of sustainable tourism, an increased level of support for the Manager of the Causeway Initiative from the existing framework and one voice needed to market and conserve the area. Suggestions for improvement were as follows:

"Investigate why current planning policies and guidelines for the Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings are being ignored and instigate appropriate corrective action to ensure compliance"

"Upgrade planning guidelines for AONB and World Heritage Sites and incorporate them as specific planning policy statements"

i) _____

¹¹ Tourist Information Centre and Tourist Information Point

"Planners must take account of how intensive development can effect tourism and destroy Northern Ireland's competitive advantage _ a relatively unspoilt environment"

"Unsuitable new developments on the coastline _ Better planning is the key"

"Greater representation is needed on the Interim Board of the Causeway Initiative e.g. Interest groups, farming groups, electoral members, to form an advisory committee"

"More public awareness of the issues must be generated"

"The tourism industry must be educated on the strategy and their role to be played in the development of sustainable tourism"

"There are no recycling facilities in the Moyle Council area"

"Too many voices are responsible for the environment. One voice is needed"

"There must be an increased distribution of information and details about management arrangements and the Tourist Information Offices to the guest houses, as most tourist enquiries take place outside office hours"

"Stronger back up and funding is required for the Manager of the Causeway Initiative from within the existing framework"

"The Causeway Initiative is only for big businesses"

"The Glens Area is under promoted"

"Someone must be employed by the Causeway Initiative who is trained in environmental management"

"Information from the Causeway Coast and Antrim Glens is scant and needs to be more people friendly e.g. explanatory leaflets"

"Improved liaison is required between agencies"

"There is a lack of action from the established agencies"

There are too many chiefs and not enough Indian"s

"Funding is needed for guides"

"Improve the water quality"

"The tourism sector of the Causeway Coast is at the mercy of unscrupulous property developers"

"Portballintrae can no longer sustain a community never mind tourists!"

"Portrush is losing business at an alarming rate"

"DOE Roads have been strangling Portrush for years"

"Before we look at sustainable tourism we need a sustainable approach"

"Planners are now considering allowing the loss of vital amenity land for high density development"

"More attention should be paid to facility providers in land _ away from the Causeway and the coast"

25) Identification of current sources of money for visitor and environmental management.

- a) Resources in the form of staffing and finance for visitor and environmental management in the North East area are currently provided by the following organisations on an ongoing basis:
 - i) Local authorities employ countryside officers who are responsible for access to the countryside, for countryside recreation and for signing and interpretation at the authorities own sites. They also employ staff for waste and litter management and maintain toilets, car parks and harbours. Some local authorities own and manage countryside facilities such as country parks, marinas and other watersports facilities.
 - ii) Environment and Heritage Service provides
 - (1) Funding for the Causeway Initiative and predecessor organisations
 - (2) Roe Valley Country Park
 - (3) Designation and monitoring of sites of national or international importance for nature conservation or earth science.
 - (4) Support funding to District Councils for access to the countryside.
 - (5) Support funding for local organisations undertaking conservation projects.
 - (6) Water quality and discharge consent monitoring.
 - iii) Northern Ireland Tourist Board provides support funding for the development and marketing of visitor amenities and attractions, and works with Roads Service to approve tourist signage in the area to help guide visitors.
 - iv) The International Fund for Ireland has and continues to provide development resources within the North East area, working with local communities, DARD and the NITB to provide special programmes. Programmes have included the Causeway Gateway programme, specifically designed to respond to needs in the area.
 - v) Forest Service provides some 30 forests in the area and provides and manages access to visitors at the majority. It protects the nature conservation interest of areas within Forest Service ownership.
 - vi) 77% of eligible landowners within the Antrim Coast, Glens and Rathlin ESA area have signed up to voluntary agreements to maintain historic stocking levels, conserve areas of key habitat, enhance farm buildings, restore the nature conservation value of hedgerows and maintain the local character of gates and gateposts. In this they are supported financially by the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development.
 - vii) The Heritage Lottery Fund supports a range of organisations within the area in their work on nature conservation, interpretation and rural heritage enhancement. Heritage Lottery Fund has greater potential to fund projects and programmes in the North East area through introduction of its area-based scheme to Northern Ireland. The area-based scheme currently funds management, enhancement and access actions within several AONB areas in England and Scotland. HLF also has an interest in protecting and enhancing a range of rural natural and built heritage in Northern Ireland, that are key to maintaining the landscapes within the North East area.

- viii) The National Trust continues to extend its ownership of coastline and other countryside properties in the area and manages to enhance their conservation interest and heritage quality.
- ix) The Ulster Wildlife Trust, RSPB and other organisations continue to acquire and manage sites that are important for wildlife in the area.
- x) The University of Ulster at Coleraine applies considerable resources to nature conservation and environmental management research and because of its location undertakes much of this within the NE area. The University has been involved in drawing down LIFE funding for a study of beach and dune management in the area, and continues to undertake studies on the Lower Bann. Other universities also apply considerable resources to study of the area.
- xi) In addition to the continuation of Government and IFI funding outlined above, the European Peace II and Building Sustainable Prosperity programme will provide resources in future under the following priorities and measures:
 - (1) Peace II
 - (a) Economic renewal - Natural Resource Rural Tourism -The disadvantaged rural areas within the North East Area will be eligible to apply for funding under this measure for a range of sustainable tourism actions including the development of new accommodation, activity businesses and programmes, development of new marketing approaches and visitor and environmental management measures.
 - (b) Economic renewal - Fisheries and Water Recreation Development Programmes with actions including the enhancement of salmonid fisheries, the provision of angling facilities to visitors, and the development of new facilities for water recreation.
 - (c) Social inclusion and reconciliation - the renovation and development of villages and protection and conservation of the rural heritage.
 - (d) Outward and Forward Looking Region - marketing the region as a tourism destination including actions such as marketing using the natural and cultural values as a base and researching appropriate markets for regional destinations.
 - (2) Building Sustainable Prosperity
 - (a) Environment - sustainable management of the environment and promotion of the natural and built heritage
 - (b) Renovation and development of villages - opportunities to improve the visual appeal of settlements within the area.
 - (c) Diversification of agricultural activities
 - (d) Encouragement for tourist and craft activities
 - (e) Planting of additional forest and woodland

26) Number of sites with nature conservation designations, considered to be in a favourable condition:

One indicator that designated nature conservation sites are not suffering from undue visitor pressure or are managed in a way that minimises pressure, is their conservation status. Sites that maintain their key habitats and species are said to be in a favourable condition.

- a) There are 53 designated Areas of Special Scientific Interest in the area
 - b) 8 EU Special Protection Areas for Birds (SPA) are in the Causeway Initiative Area. These are:
 - i) Rathlin Island
 - ii) Rathlin Island Cliffs
 - iii) Sheep Island
 - iv) Swan Island
 - v) Larne Lough
 - vi) Lough Neagh and Lough Beg (partially in the area)
 - vii) Lough Foyle (partially within the area)
 - viii) Belfast Lough (partially within the area)
 - c) 11 EU Special Areas of Conservation lie within the area, as follows:
 - i) Rathlin Island
 - ii) Bann Estuary
 - iii) North Antrim Coast
 - iv) Magilligan
 - v) Binevenagh
 - vi) Garry Bog
 - vii) Breen Wood
 - viii) Main Valley Bogs
 - ix) Garron Plateau
 - x) Carn/Glenshane
 - xi) Banagher
 - d) There are 14 National Nature Reserves within the area.
 - e) There are 5 Ramsar sites within or partially within the area
 - f) There is one Local Nature Reserve within the area at Carnfunnock Country Park.
 - g) All are currently considered to be in a favourable condition.
- 27) Number and status of protected landscape designations in the area**
- a) There are three designated Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty in the area as follows:
 - i) Antrim Coast and Glens
 - ii) Causeway Coast
 - iii) North Derry
 - iv) Part of the Sperrins AONB
 - b) The first two are designated under the provisions of the 1985 Nature Conservation and Amenity Lands (NI) Order (amended 1989) which provides

for the Environment and Heritage Service, as lead agency to be proactive on landscape, habitat and species protection and on promoting countryside enjoyment. EHS discharges this responsibility through a higher level of activity in respect of scrutiny of planning proposals, including e.g. mobile telephone masts and wind farms, coastal and upland developments etc. and through convening for a in which government bodies and local authorities can discuss and co-ordinate their actions in relation to signage, interpretation, access and recreation, and nature conservation priorities. In the case of the Antrim Coast and Glens AONB and the Causeway Coast AONB (as in other AONBs in Northern Ireland) this liaison has included consideration of the development potential and the impacts of tourism in the AONB area with the Northern Ireland Tourist Boards.

- c) The North Derry AONB and Sperrins AONB were designated under earlier 1965 (Amenity Lands Act) legislation, which does not provide for the same level of active management and protection.

28) Level of people's awareness of site designations in the area.

Awareness of the importance of the natural and built heritage of the area is an important stage in its being valued and respected by local people and visitors. The baseline audit therefore sought to establish levels of awareness of the main designations such as Area of Special Scientific Interest, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, World Heritage Site, Special Area of Conservation, Special Protection Area for Birds, built heritage Conservation Area and National Nature Reserve

- a) All of the tour operators using the area felt that they were aware of its natural heritage and the designations they have. When prompted for sites and designations all were able to provide further information. World Heritage Site was the only designation of which people were aware (60%) whilst the geological interest was mentioned by 85% of operators. There were no mentions of ASSI or AONB or European designations. 15% of operators mentioned that the area was of importance for birds but provided no further information on site status.
- b) All operators passed information about the natural heritage on to their clients, usually through using guides, but also in the form of detailed information within written tour itineraries mentioned by 20% of operators.
- c) Just over half of visitors surveyed were aware of any nature conservation designations.

29) Information available about the designations and their main objectives, and the special interest and sensitivities of sites.

Information for visitors enables them to understand the sites they are visiting, enjoy them more fully and potentially avoid damaging activities. This section identifies the information that is available.

- a) Information relating to conservation and landscape designations has been partially provided to the United Nations Environment Programme - World Conservation Monitoring Centre for the WCMC listing of protected areas accessible to people all over the world via links from www.unesco.org or on www.unep-wcmc.org/protected_areas. The value of this is that they are categorised according to the World Conservation Union (IUCN) protected area management categories and can be related to conservation within the visitor's country of origin for improved understanding. At present a limited and incomplete listing of Areas of Special Scientific Interest in Northern

- Ireland and an inaccurate listing of Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty is available.
- b) The Giant's Causeway World Heritage Site is listed on www.unesco.org and this listing provides an opportunity to obtain outline information on the geological interest and more detailed information on the natural heritage. Most free literature available in the area for tourists and visitors identifies the World Heritage status of the site but does not go far beyond this.
 - c) More detailed information on the natural heritage of the area is available within the Environment and Heritage Service (EHS) leaflet 'Causeway Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty' (priced publication) and in Philip Watson's book 'The Giant's Causeway and the North Antrim Coast' (priced publication) A further EHS leaflet publication to the Antrim Coast and Glens AONB is currently out of print. There is no similar information on the North Derry AONB most of which lies within the area or on the Sperrins AONB, though such publications may be provided through funding for natural resource rural tourism.
 - d) The EHS 'Maps in Action' database is available by appointment for consultation in Belfast and this system is capable of providing very detailed information on species and habitats of National, European and international importance in the area. This is not very accessible for visitors. EHS has provided a web site with significant detail on nature conservation sites and on built heritage in the area (www.ehsni.gov.uk) . This site can provide a map based or alphabetical presentation of the following:
 - i) Areas of special scientific interest
 - ii) EU Special Protection Areas for Birds
 - iii) EU Special Areas of Conservation (habitats)
 - iv) Marine Nature Reserves
 - v) Ramsar sites (International convention on wetlands)
 - vi) National Nature Reserves
 - vii) Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty
 - e) Outline information on each site, and its special interest, is accessible through the data base.
 - f) EHS produce an attractive booklet detailing the National Nature Reserves to be found in the area as part of a series for Northern Ireland.
 - g) EHS Built Heritage has now placed the majority of its built heritage databases on to its web site www.ehsni.gov.uk.
 - h) Despite the impressive list of sources of information above no references were made within visitor information materials to them, and no alternative free information provided.
 - i) The information provided by EHS, with the exception of the Causeway Coast AONB leaflet and the NNR booklet, is largely written for the specialist. For someone with a more general interest in the countryside no information is provided except at a site level.
 - j) Information and displays on nature conservation are available in the area at Roe Valley Country Park, Carnfunnock Country Park, and the Portrush Countryside Centre. Limited information and interpretation was available at the Giants Causeway Visitor Centre until 2000 when the Visitor Centre was partially burned down and is likely to carry and improved range of

information should it be rebuilt. Only limited, board based interpretation was available in 2001 at this site.

- k)* Local guides were available via the National Trust to interpret the Giants Causeway site during 2000 and 2001. This service is becoming more extensive and visiting groups can book guides to enhance their tour. Two RSPB staff also provide regular local guiding and interpretation of the ornithological interest on Rathlin Island and the habitat work that has been undertaken to maintain and enhance this. Occasional guided walks and talks are available at other sites in the area.

RELATIONSHIPS AND CO-WORKING BETWEEN THE TOURISM AND ENVIRONMENT SECTORS

- 1) Description of current structures and opportunities for teamwork. Extent of current agenda for teamwork between tourism interests and nature conservation/countryside management interests.

Since successful planning and development of sustainable tourism and visitor and environmental management are activities that involve a range of government departments, local authorities, site owners, transport managers and voluntary and community bodies, it is important that mechanisms exist that can carry the integrated planning and delivery required. It is therefore desirable that there are co-ordinated approaches, possibly involving a joint strategy for the area.

- a) As already stated most organisations in the area with an interest in sustainable tourism or visitor and environmental management have contacts with other organisations on these topics. The number ranges between 5 and 15 organisations. Most are also members of relevant networks with 20 different networks listed in the surveys.
- b) Prior to the Causeway Initiative most of these networks had begun discussions on sustainable tourism and the natural resource management implications. The organisation that most people mentioned in the context of discussions on sustainable tourism was the Causeway Coast and Glens Ltd.
- c) Also prior to the Causeway Initiative there were two steering groups for aspects of management of the two Co Antrim AONBs - the Antrim Coast and Glens AONB Steering Group and the Causeway Coast Access and Recreation Groups. In the former the main partners were the local authorities, Northern Ireland Tourist Board and Environment and Heritage Service, whilst in the latter this grouping was joined by the DARD (then DANI) ESA staff. Limavady, Carrickfergus and Newtownabbey were not included in these groupings since they did not fall into the geographical scope of the two AONBs under management. Similar arrangements were not in place for the North Sperrins or North Derry. Within these groupings strategies were developed between the parties for topics such as access and recreation and visitor signage. No strategies were in place at area level for visitor and environmental management.
- d) At the time of formation of the Causeway Initiative, responsibility and action towards tourism product development and planning lay with individual local authorities as a result of their statutory remit, supported and guided by Northern Ireland Tourist Board strategic approaches. Some co-ordination had taken place e.g. the development of Allways Ireland. But there was no joint strategy for the area, though CORE had involved co-ordination on wider economic development. Local authorities and tourism businesses had the opportunity to become involved in strategic product development and marketing groups at a Northern Ireland level.
- e) On the marketing front the North East area (8 Council areas) was and continues to be presented as a regional tourism destination to out of state visitors by the Causeway Coast and Glens Ltd. A partnership company with local authority and private sector membership and direction, supported financially by the Northern Ireland Tourist Board.

- f) At the time of the commencement of the Causeway Initiative there was no strategic approach to visitor and environmental management in the North East area, or its constituent Council areas, and there was no strategy for sustainable tourism, rural tourism or natural resource tourism for the area.
- 2) **Extent of engagement of rural communities in planning for tourism development, tourism marketing, visitor management and environmental management.**

Good practice literature and case studies would suggest that the communities hosting visitors should be involved in planning for sustainable tourism and in the initiatives that surround protection of the natural resource. The community survey addressed the extent to which communities surveyed had been involved to date:

- a) 3 of the ten communities responding to the survey had been involved in planning for sustainable tourism.
- b) 3 in planning for tourism marketing
- c) 1 in planning for environmental management
- d) none in planning for visitor management.
- e) The reasons cited by those communities who had not been involved were:

Topic	Lack of opportunity	Not relevant
Sustainable tourism	6 communities	1 community
Tourism marketing	6	2
Environmental management	7	2
Visitor management	8	2

- f) When asked to what extent the key actors involved communities in various activities relating to tourism and environmental management the replies were as follows.

Involve communities at all?	19 key actors
In tourism planning?	14
In tourism marketing	15
In tourism hosting?	11
In Environmental management?	13
In visitor management?	7
In guiding visitors?	9

- g) When asked to what extent key actors felt that communities should be involved in these activities the results were as follows:

Communities should be involved?	19 key actors
In tourism planning?	19
In tourism marketing	19
In tourism hosting?	19
In Environmental management?	21
In visitor management?	19
In guiding visitors?	19

- h) At present therefore the aspects in which communities are least involved are environmental and visitor management and in guiding visitors. Involvement in product development, tourism planning and tourism marketing has been on a site rather than a strategic basis.
- 3) **Extent of engagement of tourism businesses in planning for tourism development, tourism marketing, environmental management, visitor management.**
- a) Tourism businesses in the area have an opportunity to be involved in the following:
- i) Tourism marketing through membership of Causeway Coast and Glens Ltd.
 - ii) Tourism marketing and development through consultation during the drafting of local authority tourism strategies.
 - iii) Since the development of the Causeway Initiatives, all interests have had the opportunity to participate in defining the agenda for visitor and environmental management in the area. Prior to this there was no business involvement
- b) Tour operators and activity businesses have an opportunity to be involved in the following way
- i) Tourism product development through national product groupings
 - ii) Tourism product development and marketing through Allways Ireland activity packaging business, supported by local authorities and other funders.
- 4) **Extent of current employment of local people within the sustainable tourism field.**

As one of the economic indicators attempts were made to assess levels of local employment in tourism. Whilst estimates for employment are available there is no data to distinguish the origin of the employees. Partial indicators are recorded therefore as follows:

- a) Only 35% operators used local guides, and these were either blue badge or city guides (when visiting Belfast and Derry) with the remainder using their own guides or a driver guide (illegal in NI?). Operators not currently using local guides were not interested in doing so.
- b) 80% of tour operators stated that their parties took restaurant café or pub meals in the area.
- c) 85% operators used accommodation in the area as follows:
 - i) 65% used hotels during their tours
 - ii) 30% used B&B (for fly-drive customers)
 - iii) One operator used hostel accommodation for its student tours
- d) The tourism business survey identified that just over half of businesses did not employ any full time staff and 90.7% employed 8 full time staff or less. In relation to part time staff currently employed by the respondents, 75 proprietors responded. Once again, more than half do not employ any part time workers (57.3%). 20% employ 1 part time staff member, with 34.7% employing between 1 and 6 part time staff. 6 establishments employ between 15 and 45 part time staff members.

- 5) Extent of sensitive mechanisms and forward planning between tourism marketing, tourism development and environmental management interest for the resolution of issues such as traffic congestion, overcrowding, peak day over-capacity etc.
- a) There were no mechanisms for dealing with peak-day flows, congestion, crowding and over capacity prior to the Causeway Initiative and none at the time of this baseline report.
- 6) Views on the importance of dialogue between people involved in visitor and environmental management and those involved in tourism.
- a) 100% of the key actors believed that dialogue between these two parties was important, the circumstances in which the dialogue should take place included the following:

To develop a combined and consistent strategy. Access to natural resources should be managed.

Liaison needed across tourism planning, marketing, hosting, special events, peak flows. Sperrin Upland Trust an example of what could happen.

Discuss need for investment before visitor management. Environmental management strategy. Which sites should get the pressure. What should be promoted.

Primacy to maintaining the integrity of the natural resource.

On all tourism topics

Harmonise development of tourism with conservation of natural heritage interest before things are done. Pre-planning not mitigation

Left hand needs to know what the right hand is doing.

About moving people to different sites, spreading flow of visitors, all should be involved to develop sustainable practices.

Very important that tourism officers and countryside officers know what is being implemented, what policy is etc.

Passing good practice information. Chain of information from one person to another. Purpose of dialogue to increase understanding.

Share ideas, views problems and strategies.

Need to speak together to coordinate, communicate. Secure reduction in use of cars. Countryside and tourism officers must discuss promotion and development of tourism product from a sustainable perspective.

All departments co-operating

Problem sharing, support network, co-ordination

Planners, environmental managers, conflict management. Serious thinking about the fact that landscapes are not natural. Wind farms should not be turned down because AONB or ASSI. Move from preservation towards conservation is required.

No-one knows what anyone else is doing. Govt. agencies and Councils need to get together. Links between tourism and natural heritage agencies.

Understanding of sustainable tourism. Deciding on an agenda to achieve sustainable tourism. Involving everyone including those people who live in the places that visitors go to.

Tourism planning, tourism marketing, product development, special events, peak flows

Tourism planning, marketing, product development, special events, peak season

Tourism planning, marketing, events and product planning. Busy times.

- b) In discussion around the survey, issues such as different council officers being responsible for different aspects of visitor, tourism and environmental management, and not co-ordinating within councils; and the plethora of organisations with responsibility for aspects of environment and tourism, were highlighted.
- c) When asked if the dialogue between tourism and visitor and environmental management actors was good prior to the Causeway Initiative 19% said that it was. Following the introduction of the Initiative this rose to 28%. Those who felt that the dialogue was not good at the time of the survey made the following comments:

"People are engaging since the Initiative but we need to see results. Causeway Coast and Glens should link with the Causeway Initiative".

"Sperrins Tourism has achieved cross-community progress. Don't know enough about Causeway Initiative".

"Still very poor through slightly improved. Brought recognition that the Causeway Coast is over worn. Informal links are the key no new entity".

"Dialogue now better but forced. The ideal would be a sustainable tourism partnership".

"More contact following the initiative. Still no community involvement and no dialogue with recreational users except at site level. Industry not involved to an effective extent. Need a full partnership".

"More opportunity for the area to have a cogent identity. TICs need to know what is happening. The turnover there is frustrating".

"Prior to the Causeway Initiative very little communication. No some at Board level. Much more needs to be done. Improve liaison between Councils and private business. Must educate people to see this from the same angle".

"Non existent before the Initiative. Good now at Board or strategic level but very poor on the ground. Recreation and tourism not always in same department in Councils and this would help. Avoid duplication. Implement ideas in Annett report".

"Starting to improve, some limited dialogue in respect of the AONB prior to the Initiative. Still wide gaps, e.g. community not involved. Farmers, Attractions need to be involved. Bush river mustn't be poisoned again by the distillery".

"Liaison has improved since the Initiative. Difficult because three or more council officers have a role or responsibility. Need people with an environmental management remit in the area".

"Starting communication slightly. Awareness training. The seminar on 14th June will help but attendance of councillors will be difficult because of elections".

"Getting better. By Causeway Initiative forming an acceptable balance of management for entire area. Forum for discussion needed with wider representation".

"Dialogue improving, Expand CI and increase stakeholder involved. Constitution of proper Board fro Causeway Initiative".

"Letting people know what it is all about, which does what, what do they need from use. Clarity"

"Another grant scheme, product development, assist smaller providers"

"Hard to tell, feels better since the CI. Better co-ordination, sustained promotion of the message, communication to lift profile of the Initiative."

"Involve community organisations."

"Interdepartmental liaison on strategic issues"

"Dialogue improving since beginning of Initiative. Web site (intranet) with information would assist liaison".

OTHER RELEVANT INDICATORS

30) Community gain from tourism - incidence of local people gaining new facilities/ employment/income from tourism - good practice examples of development that meets the needs of community and visitor.

One of the common elements of sustainable tourism definitions is the principle that communities should benefit rather than be inconvenienced or disturbed by tourism. The community survey was designed to record the views of communities on whether they had gained from tourism in the area, with results as follows:

- a) Three communities (30% of those responding to the survey) felt that they had gained from tourism in their area. Gains included
 - i) Part-time employment - of women and young girls
 - ii) Publicity for their area - through tourism web sites
 - iii) Craft fair income
- b) Four communities (40% of those responding to the survey) felt that they had been disadvantaged by tourism in the area and commented as follows
 - "Our community is on the outer rim of the area, and is therefore left out of promotion"*
 - "We are isolated from the benefits of tourism by traffic routing away from our area"*
 - "We have traffic congestion in the village, but no-one stops to spend money "*
 - "There is an emphasis on Glens rather than our area, no spread of benefits"*
 - "Our area has been left out of promotional material, the emphasis is on the Causeway Area".*

31) Incidence of known damage to conservation interest of designated sites from high visitor numbers.

- a) Environment and Heritage Service, in its monitoring programme for ASSIs, has not encountered any incidents of damage to designated nature conservation sites by visitors to date. However concern has been expressed by others over a number of potentially damaging issues, on nature conservation sites and in the wider countryside, including the following:
 - i) Access for cars to the beach at Portstewart
 - ii) The potential for disturbance of birds in the Bann Estuary by fast powered craft
 - iii) Physical damage to the banks of the Lower Bann from jet skiers and water-skiers including damage of nests and eggs by wakes.
- b) There are some lost opportunities for positive nature conservation management through grazing parts of the Giant's Causeway site, due to the incompatibility of grazing animals and visitors.

32) Attitude of tour operators, businesses, key actors and communities towards protection of the natural resources of the Causeway Initiative area.

- a) 90% of communities cited environmental and visitor management as an essential activity in the area, the remaining 10% felt it was quite important.
- b) Almost 81% of key actors felt that environmental management and in a separate question that visitor management was essential within the Causeway Initiative Area. Those that did not feel that both activities were essential felt that they were both very important.
- c) When asked how important visitor and environmental management was to the area 50% operators felt that it was 'essential'; 35% that it was 'very important'; and 4% that it was 'quite important'
- d) Tourism businesses were also asked to rate the importance of the management of the natural resources of the Causeway Coast and Glens area an overwhelming majority of 93% of respondents felt it was very important

33) Visitor patterns, views and origins

- a) Whilst the Causeway Initiative success cannot be measured against overall visitor patterns in the North East Area this study has gathered data for comparison with previous years to provide background information of use in developing the Initiative. Two surveys in particular provide indicative material: the Queens University 1996 survey and a the System 3 Visitor Survey 1999-2000 commissioned through Causeway Coast and Glens Ltd which provided data based on 1635 calibration interview, 749 full interviews and was spread throughout the year.
- b) Data that has not been recorded elsewhere in this report includes:
- c) Profile of visitors:

Origin	1996 ¹²	1999-2000	2001 ¹³
Northern Ireland	41%	21% [⊗] 95% ¹⁴	47%
Republic of Ireland	8%	11%	3%
Great Britain	18%	26%	21.3%
Continental Europe	12%	13%	11.6%
North America	13%	29% (rest of world)	1.7%
Australia/New Zealand	19%		7.5%

- d) The main purposes of visits to the area were as follows:

i) _____

¹² QUB as part of a management study of the Giant's Causeway Area - base 455 surveys

¹³ Visitor survey as part of Baseline Audit- Countryside Consultancy and DTZ Piedad Consulting 2001 - base 414 surveys

[⊗] Staying visitors

¹⁴ Day visitors

Purpose	1996 ¹⁵	2001 ¹⁶
Holiday/weekend/short break	78%	52.6%
Day trip	Included above	29.9%
Visiting friends and relatives	12%	13.4%
Coach Tour, Business and other reasons	10%	3.9%

- e) Importance of the Giant’s Causeway site in the decision to visit the area as a whole:
 - i) In 1996 the visitor survey identified that for nearly three quarters of visitors to the Giant’s Causeway the visit to the site had been an important or very important factor in the decision to come to the area at all.
 - ii) In 2001 the Giant’s Causeway was the main reason for being in the area for just under half of all visitors.
 - iii) In the Baseline Audit 2001 survey 44% of people identified the site they were visiting as an important influence in their decision to visit the area as a whole, equal to the influence of the peace and quiet they experienced in the area. More important however was the influence of the scenery and the countryside at 71%. A similarly high figure was also recorded in the System 3 survey with 72% of visitors to the Causeway Coast and Glens area citing as their main reason for a visit the quality of the scenery and sightseeing. This is a significantly higher percentage than in any other NI regional tourism destination Designated nature conservation sites were considered to be an important influence on their visit by 15.6% of people in the baseline audit visitor survey.
- f) People who were staying overnight in the area (other than with friends and relatives) listed the most important factors in their choice of accommodation (in order of importance) as location (18%), convenience (14%) and cost (10%). Only 1.8% of people said that the environmental credentials of the accommodation had influenced their choice. Personal recommendation was also important at 7% (2001 Baseline survey)
- g) In the 2001 survey the most popular activity undertaken by visitors to the area was hiking, with 30.1% of those questioned saying that they took part in this activity. Cultural activities such as ceilidh were also popular, with 12.2% participating in such activities. Other activities listed included beaches, bird watching, sightseeing and walking.

Activity	Participated Yes	Participated No
Hiking	30.1	67.3
Cycling	9.9	87.8
Angling	2.5	95.2
Boat Trip	7.9	89.8

i) _____

¹⁵ QUB as part of a management study of the Giant’s Causeway Area - base 455 surveys

¹⁶ Visitor survey as part of Baseline Audit- Countryside Consultancy and DTZ PIEDA Consulting 2001 - base 414 surveys

Horseriding	1.5	96.2
Diving	1.5	96.2
Cultural Eg Ceilidh	12.2	85.5
Arts and Crafts	8.1	89.6
Sailing	0.8	96.9
Water Sports	6.6	91.1
Festivals	4.3	93.4
Golf	9.4	88.3
Other	16.0	81.4

- h) In terms of the importance of the activities to the enjoyment of their overall visit. Hiking was considered very important to 19% of those who took part, whilst cycling, watersports and cultural activities were considered very important to 4% of those who took part in each activity.
- i) In 1999-2000 the System 3 survey identified that 27% of visitors took part in sporting activities including walking, hillwalking and others. This compared with 49% for Kingdoms of Down[⊕] and 35% for Fermanagh[⊕]
- j) Just under three quarters of all visitors had met local people during their stay. The main circumstances of the meeting were:
- i) accommodation providers 35%;
 - ii) by chance 39%;
 - iii) dining and evening entertainment 39%.
 - iv) local guides 7%
 - v) pubs 3%.
- k) Of those that had not met local people during their visit 74% would have liked to.

34) Accommodation provision

- a) There were 35 hotels in the North East area in 2000 with 1198 rooms and 2874 bedspaces. The number of hotels has decreased since 1997 from 41. The number of rooms available has varied with 1098 in 1997, 1243 in 1998, 1305 in 1999 and 1198 in 2000.
- b) There were 390 guesthouse and B&B premises in the North East in 2000 with 1573 rooms and 3629 bedspaces.

35) Accommodation occupancy

A key economic indicator of sustainable tourism is accommodation occupancy. Figures for 1999/2000 were as follows:

- a) Hotels in the North East had average occupancy rates as follows in 2000. The area performed to the Northern Ireland average with only Belfast hotels performing better.

Room occupancy NI	Bedspace NI	Room NE	Bedspace NE
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i) _____

[⊕] Regional Tourism Marketing Groups

i)

53%	33%	53%	33%
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- b) The North East area holds 38% of all Bed and breakfast and guesthouse stock in Northern Ireland. This sector performed close to the NI average in 2000 with the South East and Belfast both performing better in room occupancy and Belfast performing better in both room and bedspace occupancy. B&B and Guesthouses in the North East had the following occupancy rates in 2000

Room occupancy NI	Bedspace NI	Room NE	Bedspace NE
28%	21%	28%	22%

- c) Average occupancy of self-catering units has been falling since 1995 (57%) and in 1999 stood at 39%. Since the overall number of weeks sold since 1995 has remained broadly the same these figures may suggest that supply of accommodation is outpacing demand. Self catering establishments had the following occupancy rates¹⁷ for year 1999 (the last year for which figures are available)

Unit occupancy NI	Unit occupancy NE
41%	39%

i) _____

¹⁷ April to October only

COMMENT AND DEFINITION OF KEY INDICATORS

It was clear from the responses to the key actor survey that the Causeway Initiative was not the only influencing factor for those who were taking an interest in sustainable tourism and environmental management. The Sustainable Northern Ireland programme and initiatives under Local Agenda 21 had influenced some people and provided guidance and impetus whilst Arena 2000 had influenced others. It will be important, in tracking the progress of the Initiative over the next few years, that efforts are made to distinguish the impact of specific actions by the Causeway Initiative from those of others with a complementary purpose, particularly as the Government moves towards consultation on a sustainable development strategy.

Clearly also the finite resources of the Causeway Initiative cannot influence all of the aspects covered in this report to date. |

It will therefore be essential to set key indicators against which the Initiative will specifically be measured in terms of its influence on progress in the area. These are set out below and an indication of the direction in which the indicators should be moving is set out.

Suggested key indicators are as follows:

KEY INDICATORS

Indicator number	Type	Key indicator description	Current Position	Desired movement	Proposed method of data gathering
1	Social cultural	Extent to which relevant strategic advice on sustainable tourism and visitor and environmental management is available to people in the tourism industry, tourism support agencies and to visitor attraction providers	Available from NITB but out of print.	Increase in the numbers of people who are aware of currently available strategic advice e.g. Blackwell, statutory planning policies or new, tailored advice.	Repeat business survey
	Environmental		Available within Planning Policies, reactive rather than pro-active approaches.		
	Economic	Extent to which there is a common understanding of the advice	Available from various websites and organisations in UK Read by few, outside the key players. No specific advice in relation to North East issues. Diverse and partial understanding of advice and priorities. Different understandings amongst major players.	Convergence of views on priorities within sustainable tourism. Convergence of understanding of the concepts. Development of targeted advice for the North East Area	List new advice materials
2	Social/Cultural	Level and productivity of teamwork between statutory agencies, communities tourism businesses and site managers	No body charged with planning and promotion for sustainable tourism and visitor and environmental management in North East.	New 'champion' body capable of motivating and co-ordinating all players. Members satisfied that 'champion' body is productive and relevant. 'Champion body' stimulates new actions.	Body formed
	Environmental				Key actor survey repeat
	Ec				Listing of new actions and impacts

Indicator number	Type	Key indicator description	Current Position	Desired movement	Proposed method of data gathering
3	S/C	Spread of visitors and consequent benefits through the area	Graph of distribution of visits shows a peak in areas close to the Giant's Causeway. Figures are relatively low outside this area.	<p>Whilst some sites such as the Giant's Causeway and Bushmills Distillery will always attract high numbers the focus should be on encouraging visits to robust sites elsewhere.</p> <p>A more even distribution should be evident in a distribution graph following the Causeway Initiative.</p>	NITB annual visitor attraction survey. Supplemented by visitor spend research to assess relative benefit in different parts of the area.
	Env				
	Ec				
4	S/C	Accommodation occupancy	<p>2000 room occupancy figures North East Area</p> <p>B&B and guesthouse 28%</p> <p>Hotel – 53%</p> <p>Self-catering – 39% (unit)</p>	<p>Accommodation occupancy should increase with efforts to encourage people to stay and take part in sustainable activities.</p> <p>Provision of any new accommodation should not reduce the occupancy of existing premises.</p>	<p>NITB Accommodation occupancy surveys</p> <p>Local survey may be necessary to achieve the detail required.</p>
	Ec				
5		Visitors receiving information on the natural resources in the area	<p>25% of visitors currently receive any information on the natural heritage of the area</p> <p>Only 9% of Giant's Causeway Visitors aware of receiving natural heritage information.</p>	<p>Ideally this would increase beyond 50% at all natural heritage sites for three reasons: increased enjoyment, increased understanding, more appropriate use of sites.</p>	<p>Visitor survey</p> <p>Availability of free information</p> <p>References in tourism marketing literature to source of information.</p>
	Env				

Indicator number	Type	Key indicator description	Current Position	Desired movement	Proposed method of data gathering
6	Env	Number of nature conservation sites damaged through inappropriate visitor use –	This is believed to be zero at present, based on EHS monitoring.	This figure should remain at zero	Routine ASSI, SAC and SPA monitoring by EHS
		Appropriate and properly resourced visitor management and environmental management activities at all important sites that receive visits.	It is arguable that monitoring of visitor impact should be more specific and rigorous	No of visited sites with management arrangements should rise.	Feature, species and habitat monitoring by occupiers of key sites. No of sites managed
7	Env	Ratio of tourism income to expenditure on visitor and environmental management	Current ratio is circa 32:1	Ratio keep pace with increases in visitor spend	Repeat survey of expenditure and compare with NITB tourism estimates.
				Higher levels of spend on visitor and environmental management in relation to visitor spend.	Repeat survey of expenditure
8	S/C	Number of full time equivalent jobs supported by tourism.	No of FTE jobs associated with the area in 1999 was 5054 with a rising trend.	Increase in FTE jobs supported by tourism	NITB Tourism estimates
	Ec	Including jobs in visitor and environmental management	No data was available about how many jobs went to local people or about the quality of jobs, or their capacity to support families. No data gathered about numbers of jobs in environmental management	Jobs go to local people Jobs are capable of supporting families Increase in no of visitor and environmental management jobs	Local research into job numbers, job occupants and local economic impact.

Indicator number	Type	Key indicator description	Current Position	Desired movement	Proposed method of data gathering
9	S/C	Community gain through tourism	Gains identified in part-time employment for young females	Gains in full time employment	Repeat community survey and attempt higher response rate.
			Gains identified in the image of the area and some settlements.	Gains in employment of wider range of people	
			Some communities feel disadvantaged by tourism <i>(e.g. all the traffic but no spend)</i>	Gains in facilities providing community and visitor services. Prevention of loss of rural services	
10		Percentage of visitors influenced by environmental criteria in their choice of accommodation	1.8% influenced by environmental credentials in 2001	Increase % through labelling scheme and greater participation in green business schemes	Visitor survey
	Env				
	Ec				

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APPENDICES:

APPENDIX 1 KEY ACTORS INVOLVED IN THE SURVEY

APPENDIX 2 COMMUNITIES RESPONDING TO THE COMMUNITY SURVEY

APPENDIX 3 BUSINESSES RESPONDING TO THE BUSINESS SURVEY

APPENDIX 4 - TOUR OPERATORS CONTACTED AND SURVEYED BY TELEPHONE

APPENDIX 5 - EXAMPLES OF VISITOR AND ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIONS RELEVANT TO THE NORTH
EAST AREA

APPENDIX I – KEY ACTORS

Kevin McGarry & Fiona Campbell	Moyle District Council
Don Wilmont	Causeway Coast and Antrim Glens Ltd
Louise Browne	Northern Ireland Tourist Board
Moira Mann	Coleraine Borough Council
Jim Edgar	Newtownabbey Borough Council
Norman Houston & Christine Osborne	Carrickfergus Borough Council
Ronnie McBride & Christine Butler	Ballymena Borough Council
Herbie Francis & Ainsley McWilliams	Larne Borough Council
John Paul	Ballymoney Borough Council
Sam McGregor & Siobhan McKenna & Richard Gillen	Limavady Borough Council
Paul Mullan	National Trust
Ross Millar	Environment and Heritage Service
Stephen McCartney	Forest Service
Billy Reid	Ecos Centre
Breige Conway	NACN
Kate Ryder	Oakleaf Community Network
Jim Cavalleros	Planning Service
David Carroll	Planning Service
Bob Brown	RSPB
Dave Irwin	Ulster Wildlife Trust
Countryside Officers	Joint meeting for all Districts - including Linda Foye (Larne BC), Michael McConaghy (Moyle DC), Sean Nelson (acting Newtownabbey BC), Mark Strong (Ballymoney BC), Lindsay Dunlop (Ballymena BC)

APPENDIX 2
COMMUNITIES RESPONDING TO THE COMMUNITY SURVEY

Margaret Gault	Craft Connections Ltd
Mairead McCormack Kelly Ltd.	Glenshane Community Development
Jane McCann	Ballymena Community Forum
Karina McCollum	Loughgiel Community Association Ltd.
Mary Halsey	Dungiven Community Resource Centre
Pat Dennis	Carnanmore Community Group
Thomas Collins MBE	Kilrea Enterprise Group
Kerry Laverty	The Bushmills Trust
Robin McIlwaine Association	Islandmagee Community Development

APPENDIX 3 BUSINESS SURVEY

Businesses responding to the business survey

1) Olive Dunlop	Ballyness Caravan Park
2) Rosemary Sherlock	Woodbank Self-catering
3) Jim Curry	Ballyreagh Golf Course
4) Valerie Greene	Fragrens B&B
5) Newtownabbey BC	Caravan Park
6) Larne BC	Caravan Park
7) Mrs RA Rosborough	Harbour Heights B&B
8) Pat King	Kings Country Cottages
9) Pamela Agnew	The Villager B&B
10) Margaret Kerr	Carnadoon B&B
11) Castlerock Golf Club	
12) JF Leslie	Leslie Hill Open Farm
13) Bill O'Hara	Brown Trout Golf and Country Inn
14) Nuala McAuley	The Burn B&B
15) Florence Sloan	Drumcovitt House B&B and self-catering
16) Mr D. Morgan	Alexander Arms B&B
17) Ann Irwin	Seacrest Apartment
18) Julie Corbett	Fantasy Island
19) Mrs H Barr	Pinegrove Lodge B&B
20) Patrick Delargy	Lurig Holiday Homes
21) Irene Moore	Carnalbanagh House B&B
22) Margaret Agnew	Brookhaven B&B
23) Mrs H Barr	Oakdale Lodge - self-catering
24) Lynchpin Ireland Ltd	Ground Handler
25) S&J McShane	Sheep Island View - hostel and camping barn
26) Marcus Jamieson	Hillsea B&B
27) Linda Burke	Liskinbwee B&B
28) James Jack	Cranagh Hill B&B
29) Irene McGaughey	Village Lodge (self-catering)
30) Mrs D Barrow	Beechgrove B&B
31) Rosemary Patterson	Tarish (self-catering)
32) Kristina Trufelli	Barry's Amusements
33) Brian Thompson	Irish Cycle Tours

34) Mrs M McCurry	B&B
35) Valerie Blake	The Village Garden Ltd, Mill Cottage
36) John McMaster	Self-catering
37) Caroline Steele	North Irish Lodge Holiday Cottages and dive resort
38) Liz Curry	Lisnagault Holiday Cottages
39) Tom Houston	Ashlea Cottages
40) Mrs V McClure	Beardville Farmhouse B&B
41) Jane Houston	Old Mill Grange -self-catering
42) Montgomery	Gardens - Benvardeen
43) Tullyglass House	Hotel
44) Robin Walker	Edenvale Holiday Cottages
45) Ann Morrison	Charlies- self-catering
46) Ballymoney BC	Caravan park and marina
47) Brigid McKeown	Tavnaghan Cottage - self-catering
48) Mr and Mrs Milliken	Guest house
49) Patricia O'Boyle	Barahilly House Self-catering
50) Joe Wishart	B&B
51) Jennifer McCurdy	Soernog View Hostel
52) Ann Marie McKay	Dobbins Inn Hotel
53) Alan Laverty	Ballylinney Holiday Cottages
54)Mrs B Barron	Beechgrove Bed and Breakfast
55)Mrs Martin	Marcool Cottage
56)Mrs Ann Millar	Glenleary Farm House B&B
57)William Millar	Slemish View
58) Glenfield B&B	
59)Mabel Dunlop	B&B
60) Anon.	Tour guide
61)Samuel & Rosemary Curren	
62)Henderson	
63)Larne Golf Club	
64)Maggie Penny	
65)Pearl Mitchell	
66)Radisson Roe Park	
67)Malley Brown & Co	
68)R A Gilmore	
69)Logans Executive Travel	

70) Billy O'Neill	O'Neills Caravans
71) Mark Holmes	Windsor Guest House
72) Trevor Clarke	Magherabuoy House Hotel
73) Basil Haire	Harebell Cottage
74) Sandy & Bridget Cramsie	O'Harabrown Old Dairy
75) Jean Brown	
76) Fiona Shirley	Kirk Lodge B&B
77) Barbara Kirkpatrick	Glen Lodge
78) Marie Jamieson	

APPENDIX 4 TOUR OPERATOR SURVEY

TOUR OPERATORS

(ticks indicate usable responses)

Into Ireland Travel Ltd ✓
Irish Coaches ✓
Irish Welcome Tours
Kleeman Ireland Reisen ✓
Martin Mulcahy Travel ✓
Moloney and Kelly Travel
Scottish Tours ✓
Showcase Ireland ✓
Shearings Holidays ✓
Travel Ireland Ltd ✓
Ulsterbus tours ✓
Abbey Tours
Allways Ireland
Brendan Tours
Castle Tours ✓
Celtic Tours ✓
CIE Tours International
Concept Ireland ✓
Conway Hammond Tours ✓
Elegant Ireland Tours ✓
Euro-Wales ✓
Terry Flynn Tours ✓
Globus/Cosmos ✓
Hello Ireland Tours ✓
Wrightlines ✓
Guidelines ✓
Tour Contractors Ireland Ltd.

APPENDIX V

EXAMPLES OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND VISITOR MANAGEMENT ACTIONS APPROPRIATE TO THE NORTH EAST AREA

Environmental Management

Managing sites and landscapes to retain and enhance their natural interest or quality. Mechanisms might include:

- Effective development planning and zoning, accompanied by effective development control and monitoring.
- Management of water quality for bathing and for nature conservation
- Management of specific sites to maintain their nature conservation interest through countryside management, restoration, enhancement, grazing regimes or people management.
- Ensuring that where visitors are invited to sites that are important for nature conservation their impacts are minimised through effective routing and information.
- Identifying elements of the landscape that particularly contribute to landscape character and initiating schemes to encourage their retention or restoration.

Visitor Management

- Effective route signing to enable people to find attractions easily, to ensure that visitors park appropriately, to ensure that visitors are aware of public transport opportunities.
- Attractive parking and lay-by opportunities to allow people to stop at places of scenic beauty.
- Effective on-site signing so that visitors can find main amenities, are aware of paths and designations, know how to use the site safely and responsibly
- Provision of information so that people can gain an understanding of the special interest of the area or site.
- Provision of opportunities for people to have a more informed experience of sites through using guides.
- Clearance of litter and restoration of missing or broken signs and facilities.
- Provision of services such as toilets at appropriate locations.
- Mechanisms to manage traffic flows at peak times.