Maldon District Tourism Strategy Research

Produced by:
East of England Tourism
Dettingen House
Dettingen Way,
Bury St Edmunds
Suffolk
IP33 3TU

Tel. 01284 727480
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Executive Summary

Market overview
The latest economic impact study figures for Maldon estimate that in 2007 Maldon District had 2.96 million visits which generated £141.6 million for the District, supporting 2,741 jobs. Marketing opportunities include a long term trend for increasing number of people taking domestic short breaks and the impetus that preparing for 2012 will provide.

Maldon from the perspective of the visitors
The area is most popular with families and older couples from Essex mostly visiting on a day trip. There is a high level of repeat visit and the average party size was 2.7 people. The area attracts a higher proportion of Cosmopolitans (+16%) and Style Hounds (+18%) compared to the East of England as a whole.

Main leisure activities undertaken whilst visiting the area include eating out (62%), visiting nature based attractions (50%), shopping (43%) and visiting local markets (33%).

Prospective visitors are particularly interested in countryside, nature & outdoor activities, arts & culture, heritage & history, followed by general wellbeing, food, drink & shopping.

Maldon from the perspective of the residents
Residents believe the Maldon District has a strong tourism product (93%). They feel tourism helps improve local residents’ quality of life and the character of the local area and that it makes a very important contribution to the local economy (81%).

Maldon from the perspective of the industry
From the perspective of the industry, potential target visitors include families, older people and couples without kids. Businesses feel current visitors are relatively low spenders. Some businesses recognise potential for high spending visitors but feel the tourism product is not in place. Environmental credentials are not seen as a marketing or business opportunity.

Tourism Product
Product strengths include the barges and the boats, the quay, the history and quaintness of Maldon town centre, the river the estuary and the coast and the marshes.

The tourism products believed not to be achieving their full potential include museums, galleries and theatres and the local events. In some cases this is because they are in need
of improvement, other times because of a lack of supporting facilities (e.g. public toilets, cafes and ice cream outlets near beach areas).

With regard to unique selling points, the character of the district has been shaped by its estuarine nature. USPs should focus on maritime activities and foods combined with Olde-worlde concept. The district should reposition itself with a refreshing brand which needs to focus on concepts such as Maritime, Heritage, Rural, Uniqueness and Untouched

Key trends that the District could capitalise on include value for time and improving visitors’ sense of wellbeing, authenticity and more in-depth experiences, responsible tourism and sustainable practices.

**Markets**
Day visitors represent the largest volume of visitors to the area (71% of all trips) and group travel has also been identified as an existing market for the area. Cultural tourism business tourism and cruise tourism are areas that provide new or growing potential for the district.

**Governance**
There is an apparent lack of joined up approach between various departments within the council in relation to the promotion of tourism (Leisure Services, Planning and Regeneration teams). There’s a limited awareness of current promotional activities amongst local tourism businesses and a perceived lack of engagement with the private sector in relation to business forums and marketing activity.

**Marketing activity**
The recently upgraded website offers information on specific things to see and do, access to maps and to find out what events are on in the area. Much of the information on the site is common to the brochure which is very positive.

Maldon District Council has the opportunity to add value to marketing activity by joining in new and better co-ordinated marketing activities at local, sub-regional and regional levels with a common strategy based on themed activity and aimed at getting visitors to spend more money and stay longer. A growth target of 4% growth in value within 5 years is reasonable for the District as a whole.
Introduction

The aims of this study are:

- to produce a wide-ranging audit of the Maldon district as a visitor destination
- to identify threats and opportunities faced by the destination
- to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the product offer
- to define the local distinctiveness (or unique selling points) of the area as a basis for creating a brand identity which will be carried across all marketing communications.

It is envisaged that the findings of this study will provide the evidence required for the development of the Tourism Marketing Plan for Maldon District.

This report draws on the evidence contained within a number of background papers which have been included as appendices to the main report:

- Town Mystery Shopper Audit
- Residents Survey
- Visitor Surveys
- Business Survey
- Qualitative investigations
- Desk research (see reference in bibliography appendix)

Background - Contribution of tourism

Visitor markets are changing rapidly. It is important to note that more short or secondary holidays are now taken in the UK whilst the long main holiday in the UK has declined significantly.

As a result the UK has experienced a small but steady decline in domestic tourism in recent years. Trips and nights have declined with spending increasing slightly. These variations also affect the East of England although overall results for the region are slightly more positive, particularly in terms of expenditure.
• The latest economic impact study figures for Maldon estimate that in 2007 Maldon District had 2.96 million visits which generated £141.6 million for the District, supporting 2,741 jobs\(^1\).

• The majority of visitors (94\%) were on a day trip. Approximately 35\% of these day trips were to urban areas, 22\% to the countryside and 43\% to coastal areas.

• Whilst staying visits only account for 6\% of all trips, they account for 24\% of all direct spending. 62\% of staying visitors were on holiday, 20\% were on visits to friends and relatives and 17\% were on business trips\(^2\).

• The value of tourism in the district is approximately 5.6\% of the £2.5bn that tourism is estimated to be worth in Essex. Maldon accounts for around 5.5\% of the county’s employment generated by tourism.

\(^1\) Source: Economic Impact of Tourism (Cambridge Model) - Maldon, 2007
\(^2\) It should be considered that whilst some people may be staying with friends and relatives, the actual purpose of their trip may be a holiday.
Current Situation, Opportunities and Barriers to Success

This section examines plans and strategies that may have a direct influence in the future development of tourism in the Maldon district area. These include EET’s Business and Strategic Marketing Plans\(^3\) and the Tourism Strategy for Essex\(^4\).

These documents describe the current situation of tourism at regional and county levels as well as identifying key opportunities and challenges at a time when the levels of discretionary leisure spending have been reduced due to the current economic conditions. The region has number of competitive advantages, which present a unique opportunity to increase the share of the visitor economy, provided that available funding is sufficient:

- Current economic climate presents an opportunity to push holidays closer to home
- Region perceived as having a slower pace of life / relaxing
- Proximity to centres of population
- Wide variety of coastal and inland attractions
- Diversity of tourism product across the area

Essex has a strong, diverse tourism product and major gateways for inbound tourism. In addition there are key opportunities for tourism in Essex and Maldon district:

- The London 2012 Olympics
- Partnerships with Essex Tourism and East of England Tourism
- A product mix that allows participation in a number of themed marketing campaigns
- Untapped potential from staying visitors and business tourism markets.

However, any future increased growth will be faced with a number of challenges, particularly in relation to visitors from outside the area:

- Limited awareness of destinations’ characteristics
- Not significantly different from other regions
- Transport infrastructure perceived poor quality (both road and rail networks)

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• Lack of one single feature that could be described as unique selling point
• Small to medium sized tourism products both in terms of visitor numbers and individual economic significance.

Growth Targets

The most appropriate a strategic growth target would be one in line with national, regional and sub-regional aspirations.

VisitBritain is forecasting 2.4% growth in the (nominal) value of inbound tourism for 2009. The East of England Regional Sustainable Tourism Strategy predicted that annual nominal growth in the value of inbound and domestic tourism to the East of England could be as high as 4% over 5 years. This target was also proposed in the Tourism Growth Strategy for Essex. However the regional prediction was made before the collapse of global economic markets.

Any forecast should act as an inspirational target. A growth target of 4% growth in value is reasonable for the District as a whole. However, Maldon DC may wish to adjust this target to account for the current recession. In addition, this target is based on a number of important contributing factors:

• The economy is showing signs of stabilising, though not yet improvement.

• Consumer confidence gradually continues to grow, and importantly is followed by an upswing in business sentiment

• The long term trend for an increased number of people taking domestic short breaks, along with an increase in the percentage of Britons planning to take a short break in the next 12 months since October/November 2008.\(^5\)

• A greater level of collaboration between the public and private sector and better co-ordination of marketing activities at local, sub-regional and regional level is forecast to have a positive effect;

• The impetus that preparing for 2012 will provide. VisitBritain estimates that the pre-Games period will be responsible for 15% of the estimated total tourism

\(^5\) The Economic Downturn Impact on Domestic Tourism Wave 3 (Visit Britain, June 2009)
benefits for the UK as a whole; the Games themselves will account for 31%, and the remaining 54% is to be generated after the Games;

However, any forecast is dependent on normal circumstances prevailing and do not factor in unexpected shocks caused by terrorism, health scares and other crises. It assumes the implementation of the recommendations included in the study, together with a continued level of funding and staffing.

Current External Marketing Activity relevant to Maldon

Tourism marketing activities are carried out at many different levels - internationally, domestically, regionally, sub-regionally and locally. They are undertaken by VisitBritain, the newly created VisitEngland, East of England Tourism, Essex Tourism and Maldon District. However there is general consensus among these organisations about consumer motivations and implications to tourism:

- The Henley Centre found that the biggest potential opportunities lie in satisfying consumers' more intangible desires - for more time, space and energy, and a greater sense of wellbeing. They have also found that consumers are demonstrating a growing desire to connect with each other and feel more in touch with local communities.
- Value for time is now as important as value for money. Visitors want guarantees that their time will be well spent and that they will feel enriched as a result of a visit.
- Consumers want to improve their sense of wellbeing. They want more time to relax, to feel fitter and healthier, to be with their families and achieve better work-life balance.
- Consumers are searching for authentic products and more in-depth experiences. They are increasingly turning to opportunities for self-development or new experiences such as chances to learn or participate in new hobbies.
- There is increased interest in sustainable transport, and tourism and green issues. Visitors still want to travel, but they also want to minimise their environmental impact.
- There is an increase in independent travel with DIY packaging of products, research on the internet and travelling off the beaten track. Visitors are now more willing to

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6 The value of the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympics Games to UK tourism, September 2007
7 What is the Future of Domestic Tourism to 2015? (VisitBritain, November 2005)
seek out lesser known places and to experience the culture of the area they are visiting. There is more interest in local food, individuality and local distinctiveness.

- The visitor economy could benefit from a growing interest from consumers in staying closer to home and moving towards a more responsible approach to their travel and leisure time.

- Future marketing strategy should aim to get visitors to spend more money and stay longer rather than simply pump volume into the regional destinations.

- Visitors are not concerned about political boundaries and are more interested in the attraction or destination they intend to visit, irrespective in which county or district it happens to be situated.

- Reaching potential visitors is best achieved when all partners, private and public, work together in order to get maximum benefit from limited resources.

EET’s themed marketing approach originates from the basis that the region is not perceived as a natural physical area and therefore does not lend itself to geographical marketing (as is carried out in the Lake District for example).

With this in mind, each year key themes common across the six counties are chosen as a basis for building awareness of the region’s tourism offer.

The proposed schedule is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Business Plan Year</th>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009/10</td>
<td>Walking &amp; Cycling</td>
<td>Focus on the region’s suitability for these leisure activities and the range of relevant product assets on offer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010/11</td>
<td>Regional Towns and Cities Short Breaks</td>
<td>Focus on market towns and new short break destinations using public transport connections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011/12</td>
<td>International Marketing</td>
<td>Showcasing proximity to London 2012 games and development of stay and visit options</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012/13</td>
<td>Domestic: Regional day and short breaks</td>
<td>Encouraging domestic visitors to visit in the Olympic year and marketing to international visitors in London</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>International Visitors: Attending London games</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013/14</td>
<td>‘Real East of England’ including people and places International marketing</td>
<td>Encouraging visitors and businesses to experience tranqui England following the ‘hype’ of the Olympics</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
User Analysis and Perceptions

People who come to the area

A visitor survey was conducted in Maldon during the period 14th July - 2nd November 2007. This was part of a wider survey of visitors to the region undertaken by EET. The following headline results derive from the face-to-face interviews undertaken among visitors to Maldon and provide a quick snapshot of visitor profile (for further information about the results of the visitor survey refer to Appendix I):

- Maldon attracts both families and adult only parties as visitors
- Maldon is more popular with families that Essex as a whole
- The average party size was 2.7 people
- The majority of visitor to Maldon were on day trips (71%)
- 69% were frequent visitors to Maldon, having visited 6 times or more
- 71% of visitors are from Essex
- 67% of respondents decided to visit the destination within the past week
- For 64% of visitors the decision to visit was influenced by previous visits, 29% mentioned word of mouth recommendations (friends/relatives, travel agent/tour operator, TICs etc)
- 48% of visitors mentioned ‘somewhere to take the children’ the main influence on their decision to visit Maldon
- The aspects of Maldon that had the most influence on the decision making process were the great visitor attractions (33%) and opportunities for outdoor pursuits (24%)
- Popular leisure activities include eating out (62%), visiting nature based attractions (50%), shopping (43%) and visiting local markets (33%).
- Maldon is less popular as a shopping destination than Essex as a whole (43% compared to 75% in Essex). Visitors to Maldon are more likely to visit nature based attractions than those to Essex (50% compared to 26%) and more likely to visit local markets (33% compared to 18%)
- The aspects that are most important to satisfaction with the visit are: Cleanliness and availability of public toilets (76% and 67% respectively); Quality of service in place to eat and drink (52%); Feeling of welcome (45%); General atmosphere (38%) and cleanliness of streets and open spaces (40%)
People who are interested in the area

Maldon Visitor Guide gives a valuable insight into the type of people who are interested in visiting the area. May, June and August are the months when people are most likely to visit, followed by July and September.

The brochure is popular with those looking for short breaks (53%), although users planning day trips are also important (44%). Those planning to stay in the area are looking to stay on average for three to four nights. Caravan sites are the most popular type of accommodation mentioned, followed by hotels and B&B / guesthouses.

Respondents were asked about their general interests. The responses have been grouped into common themes. Countryside, Nature & Outdoor Activities, Arts & Culture and Heritage & History are the main interests, followed by General Wellbeing, Food, Drink & Shopping.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Countryside, Nature &amp; The Outdoors</th>
<th>Wellbeing, Food, Shopping</th>
<th>Heritage &amp; History</th>
<th>Arts &amp; Culture</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>animals</td>
<td>beauty</td>
<td>architecture</td>
<td>arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aquatics</td>
<td>family</td>
<td>buildings</td>
<td>craft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>country side</td>
<td>cooking</td>
<td>castles</td>
<td>craft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cycling</td>
<td>picnics</td>
<td>churches</td>
<td>photography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gardening</td>
<td>food</td>
<td>heritage</td>
<td>theatre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>motorbikes</td>
<td>shops</td>
<td>historic houses</td>
<td>comedy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nature</td>
<td></td>
<td>history</td>
<td>dance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>running</td>
<td></td>
<td>national trust</td>
<td>culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>walking</td>
<td></td>
<td>steam railways</td>
<td>languages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fishing</td>
<td></td>
<td>antiques</td>
<td>books</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wineries</td>
<td></td>
<td>museums</td>
<td>music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>swimming</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>concerts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Visit Segmentatio

To provide greater insight into visitors to Maldon, we have used a value-based segmentation model called ArkLeisure. ArkLeisure is a segmentation system specifically for the tourism industry, developed by Arkenford for VisitBritain. It has been used successfully by tourism bodies to improve customer communication and to inform strategic decision making.

This segmentation method recognises that there are multi-dimensional criteria encompassing attitudes, believes and values that actually determine customer behaviour.
The visitor survey shows that Maldon attracts a higher proportion of Cosmopolitans (+16%) and Style Hounds (+18%) compared to the East of England as a whole. The Maldon District attracts fewer Functionals (-14%) and High Streets (-13%) than the East of England. For more information about the visitor segmentation see Appendix II.

Both Cosmopolitans and Style Hounds are likely to take city breaks and looking for relaxing experiences. Cosmopolitans are more likely to have taken part in holidays that involve sightseeing, and cultural break with history & heritage. Style hounds are more likely to have taken part in beach holiday involving sport activities.

A number of external factors can influence choice of destinations for consumers. This can include length of trip, seasonality as well as group profile. When visiting a destination with adult friends or family Cosmopolitans are interested in exploration, luxury and culture as well as high quality accommodation. Style Hounds enjoy exploration and luxury, nightlife and quality food and drink and high quality accommodation.

When travelling with children in the high spring / summer season, luxury and high quality accommodation are still important factors for both segments. Cosmopolitans are also looking for a variety of places to visit and day time activities for the children.

Local Community Attitude to Tourism

Consulting the local community was an important part of this study. Community support can have a significant effect on the success or failure of tourism management. This is because every local resident has the potential to be a tourism ambassador. They are also the conduit for a strong VFR market.

Residents’ opinions about the district are summarised below:

- The majority of Maldon residents interviewed believe that the Maldon District has a strong tourism product (93%)
- Residents believe tourism has a positive effect in a number of areas, including the choice of place to eat and drink, the range of attractions and leisure facilities, the condition of historic buildings and monuments and the availability of shops that meet their needs
• Respondents believe tourism improves local residents’ quality of life and improves the character of the local area. The majority of residents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that “visitors make the Maldon District more lively and fun”

• Thinking of the contribution to the local economy, residents believed that tourism is very important (81%) or important (11%). Residents identified that places to eat & drink, shops and attractions / entertainment venues as places that benefited a lot from tourism

• In Maldon 89% of residents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement: ‘I am satisfied with the overall local impact of tourism’. 94% agreed or strongly agreed with the statement: ‘Tourism in Maldon is important to the social, cultural and economic well-being of local people and businesses’

• On the whole, 97% of residents think visitors are good for the area. Residents either believe there are too few visitors (40%) or that there are the right amount of visitors (58%).

Tourism Businesses Opinions about the District

Tourism businesses feel the markets with most potential are families, older people and couples without children. Two distinct groups should be targeted; Low spend visitors are suitable for lots of existing businesses and are a group that should not be overlooked. The second group are high spenders - some businesses recognise potential for high spend but feel the tourism product is not in place.

The origin of visitors is largely seen to be the south of England. A one hour drive time is assumed to be the main catchment area for visitors (i.e. London and South Essex,) which reflects the traditional market and prevalence of day visitors. Businesses see significant untapped potential to the North and West of the district but feel there’s a distinct lack of awareness of Maldon anywhere north of Colchester.

The majority of the respondents aren’t actively using their environmental credentials to promote their businesses. This is because they don’t feel it is necessary for the district to be promoted using messages focussing on the environmentally sound nature of its offer.

Respondents feel that for the vast majority of consumers the environment is not a key driver when making purchasing decisions. However, all respondents recognised that it was
nonetheless important to indicate any positive environmental credentials - becoming increasingly important and although not at this stage a primary driver.

Most businesses see events as an opportunity for the visitor economy. Whilst the majority welcome them only a few feel that the festivals have a directly beneficial impact on their businesses in their present format. Suggestions to strengthen the impact of festivals and events include expanding the focus of festivals away from main centres and create packages with attractions and accommodation providers to benefit from such events.

Product - Strengths and Weaknesses

The following section covers the strengths and weaknesses of the Maldon District as a destination. As part of this study we conducted consultations with residents, visitors and businesses to evaluate the quality and level of the product offer. We carried out a product audit producing a series of maps that allow the product distribution to be visualised, and highlighting possible shortages. Finally we made a number mystery shopper visits to Maldon town and Burnham on Crouch to assess the standard of amenities and infrastructure (Full results for all studies are available in the Appendices).

The following strengths and weaknesses were identified during the consultations:

Strengths and can be briefly summarised as:

- The District is perceived as a tourist area by both visitors and residents.
- Best features of the district include the Prom, the park, the history and quaintness of the area, the river and the estuary, local food and the heritage and history.
- In terms of what’s unique or distinctive about the area respondents identified the barges and the boats, the quaint, the history and quaintness of Maldon town centre, the river the estuary and the coast and the marshes.

Product weaknesses can be briefly summarised as:

- According to the local community the features that least attract visitors to the district are the museums, galleries and theatre (22% believe this does not attract visitors at all) and the local events (21%).
- Provision and quality of attractions/accommodation. These are areas seen as being in need of improvement.
• Transport links - the railway is not promoted/insufficient public transport - especially to rural areas - weekend railway engineering, too much reliance on cars.

• Plenty of attractions, but none has achieved its full potential. One reason may be because there is a lack of supporting facilities (e.g. public toilets, cafes and ice cream outlets near beach areas).

The product audit covers accommodation, attractions and events. The findings show that scheduled ancient monuments, nature reserves and museums & art galleries as the largest attraction categories in terms of volume of attractions available. The accommodation audit identified twenty-seven Bed and Breakfasts and thirteen caravan sites but only four hotels and six self-catering units.

Finally, the mystery shopper visits to both Maldon and Burnham on Crouch (see appendix for further information) doesn’t assess the quality of the actual tourism product (i.e. attractions and accommodation), but complements it by assessing the standard of amenities and infrastructure that visitors can expect when they arrive to the destination.

Audit scores for Maldon town and Burnham-on-Crouch.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Burnham-On-Crouch</th>
<th>Maldon Town</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signage</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open spaces / Floral displays</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Furniture / Street lighting</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public transport . Bust stops</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleanliness</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Market</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range of products</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range of shops</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shopping environment</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catering</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>80</td>
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<tr>
<td>External appearance</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toilets</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information boards</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other information</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Score</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>76.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Positioning Analysis

The Vision and Mission Statement

A destination’s vision for the future should be one where the needs of visitor, the tourism industry, the community and the environment are in complete balance and consequently will make a significant contribution to improving the life of local people.

The current Tourism Marketing Missions Statement as defined in the Draft Economic Development Marketing Plan (2009 - 15) states:

*The Tourism Marketing actions undertaken by Maldon District Council to promote Maldon, Burnham-on-Crouch and surrounding countryside, villages and coastal areas as an attractive holiday destination, thereby assisting local businesses to gain maximum economic benefit from visitors.*

During our consultations we asked tourism businesses in the area to give their opinion about the statement as a working text. It was explained that the statement may be developed following the findings from this research. The main comments were as follows:

- Needs the word ‘will’
- Need aims and actions behind the mission statement
- Leisure not holiday destination
- Must be backed by actions
- Supporting not assisting local businesses
- Too long at the moment
- Should say something about raising awareness

In order to develop the mission statement we have carried out research looking at concepts such as local distinctiveness, brand identity, unique selling points and a SWOT analysis.

Branding and Local Distinctiveness

A brand exists in the mind of customers and comprises knowledge, understanding and value that the customer associates with the destination. It is often described as the ‘promise’ which means that consumers expect some positive results (practical and emotional) from visiting the destination.
Understanding Maldon district’s local distinctiveness is one of the most important ways of developing a brand to give the destination a competitive edge. It will become a tool to stimulate the wish to visit and experience a destination, to recommend it to friends and family and to return. It should also form the basis of a brand strategy, which in turn will provide the material for promotional themes and guide product development opportunities.

Local distinctiveness can draw on any of the following:

- natural features - the landscape, characteristic habitats, vegetation and wildlife
- man-made features - the urban landscape, architectural styles, building materials, field boundaries, visitor attractions and historical sites
- heritage, culture and traditions - history, famous people (both living and past), cultural mix, events, festivals, music, dialects and the arts
- produce and industries - food and drink, crafts, shops, and means of production such as farming, fishing, mining, industrial manufacture.

Brand Identity

One of the best ways to identify a destination’s rational benefits is to carry out an audit in the form of a SWOT analysis. Identifying a destination’s Strengths, Weaknesses and the Opportunities and Threats affecting it provides material to help form the basis of the brand, identifying its Unique Selling Points (USPs) while at the same time focusing thoughts on potential markets.

As a result of our research the following SWOT analysis, USPs and positioning statements have been generated:
SWOT Analysis

Strengths
- Local distinctiveness - especially the barges, quaint, old fashioned character of the town centre and the attractive coastal features
- Gastronomy
- Heritage and Culture offer
- Wide variety of coastal and inland attractions
- Retail provision (particularly the range of shops available)
- Local markets are particularly attractive to visitors
- High quality public toilets and baby changing facilities
- Residents and visitors rate Maldon’s friendly people as one of it’s best assets
- Highly rated family destination
- Visitor satisfaction exceeds or closely matches visitor expectations on nearly all indicators
- High level of repeat visits, suggesting that Maldon has a strong basis of return visitors to sustain the tourism industry
- Local community has a positive attitude towards tourists
- Maldon has good scores on the Tourism Sustainability Group performance indicators for sustainability
- The newly updated website and brochure reflect a modern image and are of an exceptionally high standard

Weaknesses
- Limited accommodation offer
- Perceived as expensive
- Limited parking and the transport infrastructure perceived poor quality (both road and rail networks)
- Regeneration of some coastal areas and Britannia Cinema required
- Limited arts and cultural offering
- Range and presentation of Maldon’s market stalls should better complement the overall retail offering of the town
- Local events perceived as having a limited impact on tourism. Events listing and calendars need updating
- Maldon town overshadows the rest of the product offer. Many within Maldon itself are unable to separate the town from the district
- Lack of one single feature that could be a unique selling point
- Low level of first time visitors
- Low level of staying visitors
- Low level of visitors from outside Essex
- Lack of coherent sense of brand (designs, fonts, message)
- Insufficient capacity to cater for a mass market, so must focus on high value markets to grow tourism
- Limited engagement from business sector
Opportunities

- Limited awareness of destinations’ characteristics which offers untapped potential
- Perceived as having a slower / relaxing pace of life, which is attractive to holidaymakers
- Diverse tourism product to be exploited - promotion of nature-based attractions, local markets, arts and culture and heritage & history
- Untapped potential from staying visitors and business tourism
- Encourage current visitors to stay longer and spend a bit more
- Encourage boaters to get off the boats/ spend money in the district
- Partnerships with Essex Tourism and East of England Tourism
- A product mix that allows participation in a number of themed marketing campaigns
- Proximity to London and centres of population
- 2012 Olympics
- Current economic climate presents an opportunity to push holidays closer to home
- Use ArkLeisure segmentation to target marketing messages to the best audience and achieve the best return on investment
- Demonstrate the return on investment from marketing activity in order to show the value of investment in developing tourism
- Develop new marketing opportunities using the visitor databases on the Destination Management System, populated by the TIC

Threats

- Current economic climate may reduce volume and value of tourism activity
- Impact of visitors on traffic levels and availability of parking
- Low response rates to brochure survey make it difficult to use this as an ongoing source of information about service users
- Tourism is a discretionary service for local authorities and increasing pressure of budgets pose a real threat to maintaining and developing the local tourism product
- Potential for lack of partnership work to undermine activity
- Feeling that the District Council is rather too Maldon centric could lead to limited engagement from businesses outside Maldon town
- Poor response rates from the business community to tourism initiatives, including this research
- Lack of participation by businesses in occupancy survey and confidence monitors, making it difficult to assess the performance of the industry
- Limited budgets for promotion of the district for tourism
Unique Selling Points

With regard to unique selling points, respondents highlighted the way in which the character of the district has been shaped by its estuarine nature. Unique Selling Points include maritime activities and foods combined with an ‘olde-worlde’ concept. The district should reposition itself with a refreshing brand which focuses on concepts such as Maritime, Heritage, Rural Retreat, Uniqueness and Untouched.

Positioning Statements

The positioning statements should relate to the look and feel of the district. The following straplines were suggested by businesses within the district:

- You’ll be surprised at what you find
- Hidden treasures
- So much to do; time to unwind
- Heritage and variety
- Freedom to unwind in our heritage
- Sky, sea and landscape and lots more
- Maldon District - a land of surprises
- Welcome to old England within one hour of London
- Good food, good wine, all locally produced
- Indulge in history
- Get close to nature in the Dengie
- Have a surprise close to London

The evidence presented in this section should allow tourism officials to develop a brand identity with a clear look and feel that defines the district’s positioning as a tourism destination. It should also reflect the themes, activities and experiences likely to attract visitors as identified in the visitor profile and segmentations analysis included in this report. Finally, it is important that this positioning message is carried across all marketing communications and defines colours, images style and tone of voice used to build and reinforce awareness.
Target Markets

The previous section has suggested brand concepts, USPs and positioning statements based on the current tourism product available in the district. However, it is important to recognise that the District Council does not own much of the tourism product and it is often difficult - though not impossible - to influence it. As such Maldon District Council should generate partnerships with tourism providers and link that with market-led promotional activity. Based on the evidence presented in this study there is a clear opportunity for building on the existing core markets by targeting new market segments.

Traditional Markets

The advantage of growing existing markets is that they offer the lowest risk for the quickest returns, assuming the district wants ‘more of the same’ types of visitors.

Based on the evidence presented in this report the district needs some product development but once this is achieved the Maldon District would be in a position to attract more visitors from the existing markets and convince them to visit more often.

Group travel has been identified as an existing market for the area. The evidence generated from the research shows that in order to penetrate this market further the following improvements are essential: facilitate more parking for coaches, better promotion to coach companies and more facilities for coach visitors and organisers.

Day visitors represent the largest volume of visitors to the area (71% of all trips). Essex and the neighbouring counties of London, Kent, Cambridgeshire, Hertfordshire and Suffolk provide a massive market for day trippers. The district’s product should be promoted in a way that highlights the abundance of options matching visitors’ general interests (Countryside, Nature & Outdoor Activities, Arts & Culture and Heritage & History and General Wellbeing, Food, Drink & Shopping).

Growing and New Markets

Based on the analysis of product strengths and marketing activities taking place in the broader context by organisations such as VisitBritain, East of England Tourism and Essex Tourism, we have identified three strong markets for future promotion:
Cultural & Heritage Tourism

This type of tourism includes at least the following:

- visual and performing arts;
- museums, galleries, open studios, libraries and archives;
- literary connections and film and television including locations;
- festivals and other cultural events;
- design and crafts;
- architecture;
- creative tourism - e.g. participating in creative activities such as painting.

The visitor survey shows that Maldon attracts high numbers of Cosmopolitans and Style Hounds. These segments are looking for mentally relaxing experiences involving cultural breaks involving history & heritage related sightseeing. In addition, prospective visitors responding the Maldon tourism guide have indicated they are interested in arts & culture and heritage & history. Finally, the product audit shows that the district is rich in culture based attractions, particularly museums & art galleries, and a comprehensive calendar of events all year round.

There are good opportunities to promote cultural and heritage tourism in partnership with county, regional and national promotional activity, thereby obtaining added value for Maldon District Council’s campaigns.

Business Tourism

Business tourism is a broad sector encompassing meetings and conferences, business or corporate travel by individuals, incentive travel and exhibitions and trade fairs. The business tourism sector accounts for 26% of all tourism in the UK. In the East of England there were c137,000 conferences and 6 million delegates generated 9.2 million delegate days. Regional conferences generated an estimated expenditure of £592m.

Meetings and conferences are easier to influence than the other sectors, and are generally held in the shoulder months so are the perfect complement to leisure tourism. Maldon does not have a major purpose built convention centre and only Five Lakes could be considered a major conference centre within the district. However this should not be a barrier to benefiting from business tourism due to its proximity to Stansted airport and the fact that

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smaller meetings of 10 - 50 people have been identified are growth areas for the sector. Research carried out on behalf of the East of England Development Agency last year showed that currently approximately 35% of meetings held in the East of England are for less than 25 delegates.

Demand for unusual venues is growing. A common complaint is that most venues are uninspiring and “could be anywhere”. There is a gap in the market for a different and more memorable conference experience - enjoying different surroundings, eating local produce and perhaps taking part in team-building or partner programmes that are more closely in touch with the local environment.

Opportunities for Maldon district include:

- Economic downturn presents opportunity to push 'local' venues particularly non-residential (and therefore less expensive?) venues
- Opportunity to exploit the growth in alternatives to chain hotels. Promotion could focus on unusual visitor attractions, historic inns and hotels etc.
- Increasing emphasis on relaxation (bright rooms, pleasant outdoor environment, separate break out areas)

Recommended promotional activity:

- International Confex may well be the most effective trade show to demonstrate the offer
- Increasing emphasis on imaginative food and beverage offerings
- Green credentials - prepare policies, communicate and deliver where possible.

Cruise Tourism

By any measure, the cruise industry has enjoyed a record of success unrivalled by any other sector of the leisure market in the last 10 years. The UK is now the world’s second largest producer of cruise passengers with 591,000 people setting sail on their cruises from UK ports in 2007 with a direct spending by passengers and the cruise industry itself worth more than £600m to the UK economy. Passenger purchases account for 20% of all direct expenditure (£120m).

Harwich Port is the third busiest cruise port in the UK with 53 turnaround calls, 7 transit calls and a total of 133,660 passengers in 2008, with an additional 18,000 going through Tilbury Port. Although these figures show that the local ports are normally used as an
embarkation or disembarkation point, Harwich aims build on the current seven cruises calling mid journey, or transit calls from 2008.

Passengers and crew will come ashore to spend money in local shops, restaurants and local attractions. Maldon could capitalize in current and potential growth in transit calls to Harwich and Tillbury ports over the coming years by promoting the Maldon District as a destination in its own right for day excursions.

Tourism officials should ensure suitable information is available by providing excellent destination marketing materials and training for the excursion companies and for use by the Ports.

Local Governance - Industry Engagement / Collaboration

During our consultations with businesses (business survey, telephone interviews and workshop) we asked respondents about their views of the role of the Council and what they perceived the Council should be doing in order to maximise the value of tourism to the district. Respondents were asked about weaknesses relating to council and the following specific comments were made:

- Don’t link attractions with accommodation
- Lack of promotion (e.g. theme based activities such as golf)
- Planning department “the answer is no, what’s the question?” - Slow and negative approach to tourism
- Lack of support to help businesses develop
- Lack of understanding of the impact that their decisions have on businesses
- Lack of dedicated and specialist tourism officer since Russell Dawes left
- Lack of tourism policy
- Don’t understand the product
- Don’t value tourism as an economic driver
- EU funding - don’t exploit EU funding opportunities

The Council: There appears to be a lack of joined up approach between various departments within the council. Of particular significance is that the promotion of tourism appears to be split between Leisure Services, Planning and Regeneration teams.

Urgent priorities: The urgent priorities that the Council should tackle include promoting public transport, liaising with the planning department, proactive promotion the district and enhance parking facilities to encourage visitors to the area.
Promotion: Few businesses are aware of current promotional activities taking place and it is felt the tourism department should be more proactive. The website is cited by a few as being good and having potential but there’s a general perception that funding had been withdrawn for proactive tourism marketing. Respondents also believe marketing activity should activity link tourism products by promoting themes.

Communications: There is a perceived lack of engagement with the private sector when it comes to decisions about tourism marketing. Respondents wanted open and honest communication, and more of it.

Membership organisations: There is a perception that council has tried to take on their role and create business forums in the past but these have been unsuccessful. It is accepted this has led to a withdrawal of goodwill from businesses.

Improving Marketing Activity

Local Authorities usually have control over TICs, destination websites and publications on the range of activities and attractions available in the area. Their role is to develop, operate and manage these services, produce information on walks, architecture, literary figures, landscapes, wildlife, and the other elements that make up the destination’s character and distinctiveness.

Visit Maldon Website - [www.visitmaldondistrict.co.uk](http://www.visitmaldondistrict.co.uk)

EET conducted research to evaluate the effectiveness of EET’s Destination Management System (DMS) and to improve its CRM capabilities by conducting segmentation work. *(EET Website Functionality Research, March 2009)*. As part of the study we analysed the profile, characteristics and perceptions of current tourism destination websites.

Many of the finding are relevant to Maldon District as a tourism destinations:

- The role of the destination tourism body should be primarily to promote the area and provide information about it. To a lesser extent they are seen as being there to run TICs in the area and to provide a sales channel for holidays.

- The main reasons for people to use destination’s website are to look up specific things to see and do, get maps (if available) and to find out what events are on in
the area. As such it is likely users will turn to this source of information when searching for ideas for day trips.

- The research also analysed respondents’ perceptions of the accommodation pages of destination tourism websites. On the whole they expect the site to offer ideas for accommodation options (rather than booking facilities).

- The results show that the lower the cost of the accommodation, the less of a requirement there is for detail information. People looking for higher end accommodation would not feel confident making a booking based on online entries with grid. A basic entry with availability grid generates more confidence amongst viewers. As you would expect confidence levels when deciding to book accommodation are highest when looking at full entries with bookable product information.

The website (http://www.visitmaldondistrict.co.uk/) has recently been updated. This was certainly overdue and the new stand-alone site is a welcome and necessary addition to the district’s tourism marketing material. It is pleasing to note that many of the points listed above are met by the new site.

Much of the information on the site is common to the brochure which is also positive. However, one key consideration for the future is creating a more coherent sense of brand. The brochure and the website use different brands (Discover the Maldon District and Visit the Maldon District), with differing design styles and fonts. This really is something that should be addressed in order to reduce consumer confusion and create a single, strong brand for the area.

Tourist Information Centres

Research shows that visitors rank “access to information whilst on holiday” as their third top priority. It is estimated that at least 10% of visitors use a TIC during their stay in the destination. Leaflets, websites, and information boards also help customers access the information they need before and during their visit.

EET has recently undertaken a review of the role of the Tourist information Centre (TIC) service in the East of England. The resulting strategy document outlines the priorities for creating a sustainable future for TIC services and makes recommendations for

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implementation. The strategy is based on the recognition that budget reductions and increasing use of technology are driving fundamental change to the nature and role of TICs.

In addition, and as part of this study, we conducted a mystery shopper visit to both Maldon and Burnham on Crouch TICs. The audit covered aspects related to the quality of service that a customer is likely to experience when visiting either TIC and involved a visit, a phone call and an e-mail enquiry to each TIC.

During the visit the assessor marked the TIC in terms of its signage, cleanliness, information display, staff appearance, range of saleable goods and quality of service. The phone call was judged in terms of the politeness and professionalism of the service given and the accuracy of the information provided.

This section of the report summarises the key findings from both the review document and the mystery shopper audit, and provides details of a recommended approach that are relevant to Maldon and Burnham on Crouch TICs.

Essentially the TIC’s focus should one of a well-placed, cost-effective, high quality provision that utilises ICT and Internet opportunities. It should operate as part of an integrated network and as an intrinsic part of the destinations tourism delivery strategy.

Specifically, EET’s review recommends that TICs should:

- Be managed cost-effectively, taking advantage of available commercial opportunities;
- Be located in accessible and visible locations;
- Have trained staff with high levels of customer service skills.

The review has also shown that, in many cases, there is no formal link at destination level between the TIC and the marketing function. The TIC is the ‘shop window’ and the only face-to-face contact with visitors. Maldon and Burnham on Crouch TICs should therefore play a key part in the District’s marketing strategies and encouraged to:

- Create effective customer databases through the complete application and utilisation of the Destination Management System (DMS);
- Improve the delivery of brochure fulfilment and conversion of bookings by offering a fully professional and knowledgeable email, counter, mail and telephone service;

10 EET, Destination Tourism Mystery Shopper Audit - Maldon District, May 2009
• Provide the first point of contact for visitors once ‘on territory’, thus enhancing the potential visitor experience through the promotion of items such as theatre tickets, attractions, excursions and events.

The District’s TICs should ensure they are regarded as the best, most comprehensive source of information to current and prospective visitors with particular emphasis on:

• Face-to-face service delivered by trained staff, highly skilled in the provision of top quality customer service;
• Accuracy, quality and depth of information;
• Impartial advice and reassurance;
• Promotion only of quality assured accommodation and facilities;
• Provision of high quality information to customers over email.

Other considerations include the delivery of a strong sense of welcome for visitors, overt branding, quality and ambience of the TICs supported by common systems, and consistent service delivery. The geographic location of the TIC can also, according to the review, have a direct effect in the success and effectiveness of a TIC service in terms of the profile, its prominence, the impact of visitor footfall and its usefulness as a hub for visitors.

The results of the TIC mystery shopper audits are summarised below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Burnham on Crouch</th>
<th>Maldon</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Location &amp; Accessibility</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opening Times</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Range</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Burnham on Crouch TIC - Observations:

• The TIC is located in the centre of the town but location isn’t immediately apparent.
• Consideration could be given to reducing winter hours and opening on a Sunday in summer.
• The range of information is reasonable and includes sufficient local information.

Maldon TIC - Observations:

• Maldon’s TIC is located in a very suitable location and it is well signposted.
• Consideration could be given to opening on Sundays in the summer.
• The range of information is very good particularly for Essex and Maldon district areas.
• Face-to-face service was generally commendable.

The results of the businesses consultations carried out as part of this study show that:

• Businesses think that the TIC should be more proactive. For example, by linking enquiries for information about local events or attractions to accommodation in the District. The opportunity for cross-selling is not being exploited sufficiently.
• It is recognised this may be as a result of lack of funding
• Opening hours are perceived to be insufficient and it is felt that TIC opening hours should include weekends

Publication Guides / Events List

The District Council recently updated the district guide, and whilst the last iteration was of a decent standard, the new one exceeds it in many respects. Design is of an exceptionally high standard, making use of bright colours, simple modern fonts and high quality landscape photography to create an aesthetically pleasing document.

Looking at the events listings and calendars produced by the District Council, the two smaller documents (Activities Afloat and Promenade Park) are reasonably well laid-out. However the ‘What’s On’ document is very ‘busy’ and as such not entirely easy to follow. In short, it is rather a shame that such a wealth of carefully collated information is presented in such an unappealing fashion.

Consideration must be given to ways in which this information can be displayed in a more aesthetically pleasing way. Efforts should also be made to ensure that production is more professional (budget permitting) and a consistent branding message should be carried across all three.
Tourism Development

Marketing is only half the tourism challenge for the Maldon District. Continuing to maintain and develop the tourism product is the other half of the challenge. Individual businesses will undertake their own development programmes depending on specific needs and type of business. However, destination-wide programmes need district level support to succeed, at least in the early stages. These programmes may include:

- Raising quality standards
- Training the workforce
- Delivering strategic objectives (e.g. improve accommodation stock)
- Industry engagement (business networks, support, encouraging development and marketing activities)

Promoting Quality Products

During the consultations some interviewees commented that some of the tourism product needs updating / upgrading. Whilst some of these comments may relate more to perception than reality, it is essential that Maldon District Council only promotes high quality products by promoting only those services that have been quality inspected and assessed.

Hotel Development

Maldon District Local development Framework states that: ‘The Council will […] support the development of a new hotel in an appropriate location with at least 80 beds which will help to fill the existing gap of hotel accommodation in the District’.

In addition, Maldon District has signed up to an Essex wide hotel demand study which will highlight likely future demand as well as identifying supply shortages. Whilst hotel development is private sector led, the councils can influence the process through the provision of relevant information and a supportive planning process.
Monitoring the performance of the tourism industry and the impact of tourism and marketing programmes will always be a key priority for Local Authorities. Not only is it a pre-requisite for the effective management of the destination, it is also necessary to ensure that programmes deliver best value. It is essential to have information to help shape strategies and action plans required to meet future challenges in a structured way.

The challenge lies in measuring this. The Cambridge Model provides a useful benchmark but should be complemented with additional indicators that can be measured quickly and easily to provide periodic snapshots of growth:

- Collecting annual visitor numbers across a sample of attractions within the district;
- Monitoring annual bed / unit occupancy across a representative sample of accommodation establishments.

The impact of tourism and marketing programmes can be measured as follows:

- Annual footfall, number of e-enquiries and visitor spend at TICs;
- Annual unique visits to the District’s official website, and the number and value of bookings;
- Return on investment from promotional campaigns

Further advice about monitoring key performance indicators is included in Appendix X.
APPENDIX I
VISITOR SURVEY
INTRODUCTION

The aim of the visitor survey was to provide quantitative information about the profile, motivations to visit, visit behaviour, expenditure, and attitudes towards the visit experience among a cross-section of visitors. Face-to-face interviews were undertaken among visitors across a cross-section of visitor locations within each county in the East of England during the period 14th July - 2nd November 2007. Throughout this report the results for Maldon have been compared to those for the East of England and Essex as a whole where applicable.

There was an overall sample of 1062 leisure visitors either on a leisure day trip (involving sightseeing, visiting attractions, shopping, other leisure or sports activities), visiting friends or relatives, or on a holiday or short break, who spent at least one day (minimum of 4 hours) in the destination they were visiting. Those visiting solely for business were excluded from the sample. The sample for Essex was 255 and the sample for Maldon was 42 interviews.

VISITOR PROFILE

Maldon attracts both families and adult only parties as visitors. However, Maldon is more popular with families that Essex as a whole - 40% of parties visiting Maldon included children compared to only 18% in Essex. The majority of adult only parties were mixed, suggesting that adult visitors are primarily couples. The average party size was 2.7 people.

[Diagram: Visitors to Maldon - Party Composition]
In terms of visitor origin, the majority were from Essex or from other parts of the UK (excluding the East of England). 10% of visitors were from overseas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Maldon</th>
<th>Essex</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Essex</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rest of UK</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overseas</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rest of the East of England</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not specified</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The breakdown in terms of ArkLeisure segmentations is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>East of England</th>
<th>Essex</th>
<th>Maldon</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cosmopolitans</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Functionals</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Style Hounds</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Street</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discoverers</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Followers</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Sample Size)</td>
<td>-1062</td>
<td>-255</td>
<td>-42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For further information about the ArkLeisure segmentation refer to Appendix II - ArkLeisure Segmentation.

3 TRIP TYPE

The majority of visitors to Maldon were on a leisure day trip (71%).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Essex</th>
<th>Maldon</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Holiday/short-break</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leisure day-trip</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visiting friends or relatives</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The visitor survey shows an encouraging level of repeat visits. 69% were frequent visitors to Maldon, having visited 6 times or more, compared to 66% of visitors to Essex as a whole. 12% were on their first visit to Maldon, compared to 19% in Essex as a whole.
4 DECISION MAKING AND MOTIVATION TO VISIT

Reflecting the high proportion of day-trippers (of a minimum of 4 hours), two-thirds of visitors (67%) decided to visit the destination within the past week, with 36% deciding to visit in the last 1-2 days. However, there is also evidence of longer lead-times in the decision making with 19% deciding to visit within the past month, 5% within the past 6 months and 10% longer ago.

![Visitors to Maldon - Timescales for Deciding to Visit](chart.png)

Previous visits and word of mouth recommendations (friends/relatives, travel agent/tour operator, TICs etc) are critical in influencing visitors’ decisions to visit the destination. Over half (64%) mentioned being influenced by previous visits. A high proportion of visitors to Maldon mentioned word of mouth as an influence on their decision to visit - 29% compared to 18% of visitors to Essex and 23% of visitors to the East of England. Advertising (2%) and the internet (2%) were less influential.

Visitors were asked (from a prompted list) about what influenced their decision to visit Maldon, and were able to choose up to four aspects. Some of the aspects that influenced the decision to visit related to the visitor and their needs and others related to Maldon.

Reflecting the high proportion of families, the most common influence relating to the visitor and their needs was ‘somewhere to take the children’.
The aspects of Maldon that had the most influence on the decision making process were the great visitor attractions (33%), opportunities for outdoor pursuits (24%) and the great places to eat and drink (19%).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Influences on the decision to visit</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Great visitor attractions</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunity for outdoor pursuits</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great places to eat and drink</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Picturesque inland waterways and canals</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rich cultural heritage</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent shopping facilities</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historic character of Maldon</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beautiful countryside and hills</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locally produced food and drink</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunity for sporting activities</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5 VISIT EXPERIENCE

Visitors to Maldon planned to or had participated in a wide range of activities. Eating out was very popular, with 62% of visitors plan to do so during their visit. Other popular leisure activities include visiting nature based attractions (50%), shopping (43%) and visiting local markets (33%).

Maldon is less popular as a shopping destination than Essex as a whole, with 43% of visitors participating in shopping compared to 75% in Essex. However, visitors to Maldon were more likely to visit nature based attractions than those to Essex (50% compared to 26%) and more likely to visit local markets (33% compared to 18%). This may reflect the strength of local farmers markets in attracting visitors to Maldon.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eating out and drinking</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visiting nature reserves/wildlife parks/gardens</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shopping</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visiting local markets</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visiting heritage sites/historic attractions</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visiting other visitor attractions</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other sports/outdoors pursuits</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visiting museums/art galleries</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walking</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visiting leisure/theme parks</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special events/festivals</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None of these</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theatres/shows</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waterways activities (e.g. boating, canoeing etc)</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Visitors were asked which aspects (from a prompted list) were important when choosing a place to visit in their leisure time. The following were most important, and it is therefore critical that the district is seen to deliver high standards in each of these areas:

- Cleanliness and availability of public toilets (76% and 67% respectively rated these factors as very important)
- Quality of service in place to eat and drink (52%)
- Feeling of welcome (45%) and general atmosphere (38%)
- Cleanliness of streets and open spaces (40%)

When visitors were asked for their satisfaction with the same aspects in the area, they were most satisfied with the following:

- General atmosphere and feeling of welcome (64% of respondents rated both of these as excellent)
- Range of visitor attractions & places to visit (52%)
- Cleanliness of streets and open spaces (45%)

It is important to compare visitor satisfaction levels to the overall importance that they assign to each aspect of the destination. This can assist in deciding where to invest in improvements to improve the destination according to the priorities of visitors.

The charts that follow plot satisfaction against importance. The public toilets score relatively badly in satisfaction terms compared to their importance score for visitors. The chart shows that public toilets score relatively badly in satisfaction terms compared to their importance score for visitors.
Visitors to Maldon - Satisfaction vs Importance

Range of visitor attractions & places to visit
Feeling welcome
Quality of service at attractions & places to visit
Value for money at attractions & other places to visit
Local produce in places to eat and drink
Quality of service in places to eat and drink
Value for money in places to eat and drink
Range of shops
Availability of public toilets
Cleanliness of public toilets
Cleanliness of streets and open spaces
Quality of service in shops
Quality of the shopping environment

Satisfaction
Importance
The table below shows the average expenditure by visitors, broken down by category. Please note that the average expenditure on accommodation is based on both staying visitors and day visitors (who would spend nothing on accommodation).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Average Expenditure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accommodation</td>
<td>£6.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eating and drinking</td>
<td>£14.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buying food, drinks or snacks</td>
<td>£3.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shopping (all purchases except food and drink)</td>
<td>£4.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entertainment</td>
<td>£6.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel and transport</td>
<td>£11.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Spend</td>
<td>£47.29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX II
ARKLEISURE SEGMENTATION
1 INTRODUCTION

Customers are more than just their income or where they live, and their choices about how to spend their leisure time reflect that. ArkLeisure is a segmentation system specifically for the tourism industry, developed by Arkenford for VisitBritain. It has been used successfully by tourism bodies to improve customer communication and to inform strategic decision making.

ArkLeisure uses people's values and willingness to pay for different kinds of services and product attributes to predict the kinds of holiday they are most likely to choose in different situations. This segmentation method recognises that there are many criteria that actually determine customer behaviour and seeks to identify the issues that matter most to the segment. By getting a better understanding of these criteria, the tourism industry can build up a much deeper insight into what really underpins customer decisions and actions.

2 ABOUT ARKLEISURE

Using multi-dimensional criteria about customer the attitudes, beliefs and values, the British holidaying public have been grouped into eight main segments. The segments are mapped on the diagram below, showing whether the segments are more mass market or independent market and whether they are innovators or sustainers.
3 ARKLEISURE SEGMENTS CURRENTLY VISITING MALDON

The visitor survey in Maldon has revealed that the breakdown of visitors in terms of ArkLeisure segmentations is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Segment</th>
<th>East of England</th>
<th>Essex</th>
<th>Maldon</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cosmopolitans</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Style Hounds</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Functionals</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discoverers</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Street</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Followers</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Sample Size)</td>
<td>-1062</td>
<td>-255</td>
<td>-42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To underpin the decision making for Maldon’s tourism strategy, this report will focus on the segments that are most relevant to Maldon rather than discuss segments of less relevance to the district in great detail.

The visitor survey shows that the top two segments visiting Maldon are Cosmopolitans and Style Hounds, and that Maldon attracts a higher proportion of Cosmopolitans (+16%) and Style Hounds (+18%) compared to the East of England as a whole. The Maldon District attracts fewer Functionals (-14%) and High Streets (-13%) than the East of England.

4 DESCRIPTION OF STYLE HOUNDS

Style Hounds are

- Very brand/ fashion conscious, they see fashion as delivering style.
- Not keen to be seen as old fashioned.
- Early adopters, who will go for things that are new/ ‘out of the ordinary’, believing that they are setting the fashion.
- Risk takers who like to try new and different things. They live a full and active life.

They

- Like to be part of the latest trends
- Are strongly influenced by others, with the spending power to do what they want.
- If they have money they are ready to spend it.
- Will pay for better service - which to them means ‘more to do’ more fun.
- Haven’t much interest in more ‘sophisticated’ arts, or cerebral activities.
• Peace and relaxation in the traditional sense is not what they look for; fun and excitement is what defines a good time.

5 DESCRIPTION OF COSMOPOLITANS

Cosmopolitans are:
• Strong, active, confident and stylish. They do what they want rather than follow any particular fashion.
• Comfortable trying new things that are out of the ordinary. Yet happy to adopt traditional values when appropriate.
• A high-spending market who find it easy to justify buying expensive alternatives.

They
• Are risk takers and this is reflected in their purchases and their desire for things that are new and different. They like new challenges, both physical and intellectual.
• Life for this group is full and active, but with an appreciation of art and culture.

6 REACHING THE SEGMENTS

The following tables show the most effective means of reaching each segment. The scores in red indicates whether a segment is more likely to buy a particular newspaper / publication. The scores in blue indicate if they are unlikely to purchase.

The score itself is a derived index. A score of 175 means that a person is 75 times more likely to purchase a publication. A score of 75 means that they are 25 times less likely to purchase.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Daily paper readership</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Cosmopolitans</th>
<th>High Street</th>
<th>Discoverers</th>
<th>Followers</th>
<th>Traditionals</th>
<th>Functionals</th>
<th>Habituals</th>
<th>Style Hounds</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daily Newspaper Readership</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Times</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Independent</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Guardian</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Telegraph</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>269</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Mirror</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Sun</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Times</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>242</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>254</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Daily Mail</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Express</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Scotsman</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>251</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metro</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paid for Local Paper</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Cosmopolitans have high scores for the following publications:

- Financial Times
- Metro
- Independent on Sunday

Style Hounds have high scores for the following publications:

- The Sun
- Financial Times
- Metro

The segments that use the internet most frequently are:

- Discoverers
- Traditionalists
- Cosmopolitans
- Style Hounds

The proportion of each segment that uses the internet is increasing all the time especially for holiday / leisure related purposes.
7  HOLIDAY PREFERENCES BY SEGMENT

The following diagram highlights which type of trips appeal to which segments.

The closer a red ‘holiday bubble’ is to a blue ArkLeisure segment the more associated it is to that segment, e.g. we can see that holidays in the country appeal to the Traditionals while active sports holidays appeal to the Style Hounds.

The two key dimensions that define the market are shown on this map. The dimensions are quite evenly matched. The slightly more dominant dimension is based on an individual’s way of thinking - the more independent minded they are the further over to the right they will be and the more they rely on external influences the further over to the left they will be.

The other dimension, on the vertical axis, is based on how active the holiday or short break is. The closer to the top of the map, the more active a break will be and the closer to the bottom, the more relaxed it will be.

These two dimensions account for 88% (46% + 42%) of the explanation of the whole market.
The map therefore illustrates that luxury breaks with adventure / activity tend to attract Cosmopolitans, Style Hounds; yet they are still attracted to the relaxing side of a holiday and show interest in Health Spas.

Discoverers and High Streets are more likely to be attracted by cities whereas Traditionals and Functionals prefer a rural option.

Cosmopolitans and Functionals are driven by culture, which for Functionals includes history & heritage.

All the above segments except Style Hounds enjoy sightseeing.

Thus we can identify the types of segment that will be attracted by the different sorts of activities that Maldon has to offer.
This is further demonstrated by the data in the table below that illustrates the types of holidays taken by each segment in a 12 month period (2004).

The figures in red indicate those segments most likely to participate in each of the different types of holiday listed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Cosmopolitans</th>
<th>High Street</th>
<th>Discoverers</th>
<th>Followers</th>
<th>Traditional</th>
<th>Functionals</th>
<th>Habituals</th>
<th>Style Hounds</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sightseeing</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beach holiday</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City break</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outdoor break</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural break</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country holiday</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History &amp; heritage</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sport/ activity</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holiday Centre</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family attraction</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cruise</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extreme adventure</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heath/ spa holiday</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cosmopolitans are more likely to have taken part in the following types of holiday:

- Sightseeing
- City break
- Cultural break
- History & heritage
- Health / spa holiday

Style hounds are more likely to have taken part in the following types of holiday:

- Beach holiday
- City break
- Sport / activity
- Health / spa holiday

8 HOLIDAY PREFERENCES BY CIRCUMSTANCE

A number of external factors can influence choice of destinations for consumers. This can include length of trip, seasonality as well as group profile.

The tables below illustrate the sort of things that each segment looks for in a short break based on a number of different scenarios.
A Trip with adult family / friends

The preferences of segments when visiting a destination with adult friends or family are;
- Exploration and luxury for Style Hounds
- Exploration, luxury and culture for Cosmopolitans
- Nightlife and quality food and drink for Style Hounds
- High quality accommodation for Cosmopolitans, Style Hounds and Discoverers

A Trip with children in summer

When travelling with children in the high spring / summer seasons;
- A short sun break leads the way
- Luxury is still important to Cosmopolitans
- High quality accommodation is very important to Style Hounds and Cosmopolitans
- Discoverers and Cosmopolitans are also looking for a variety of places to visit
- This is essential for family groups with children who need more day time activities
A Trip with Partner in Spring / Summer

- When visiting with a partner in the Spring or Summer;
  - Luxury and being spoilt for Style Hounds, Cosmopolitan, High Street and Discoverers
  - Along with high quality accommodation and food and drink

9 ATTRACTIONS PREFERENCE

This section looks at days out and attractions preferences by segment.

The two key dimensions that define the market are shown on the following map. The horizontal axis shows to what extent the individual prefers heritage or amusement.

The other dimension, on the vertical axis, is based on whether the individual prefers art or investigation.
Style Hounds, High Streets and Followers like their attractions and days out to be built around amusement. Style Hounds and Followers don’t like to think too much for themselves and like to have their enjoyment laid on for them. Theme parks are particularly appealing for these segments.

Funtionals and Traditionals are at the other end of the spectrum. These segments are interested in history and heritage and attractions that will expand their knowledge or offer a peaceful and nostalgic experience.

Cosmopolitans are the most open minded of the segments and are willing to try most things. In the diagram they are positioned near to the centre with most attraction types surrounding them, showing how open they are to the various experiences. They are the most appreciative segment of arts and culture.
APPENDIX III

BROCHURE USERS SURVEY
1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of the brochure users’ survey was to provide quantitative information about the profile, visit behaviour and media preferences of readers. The brochure questionnaire also provides the opportunity to track the responses over time by repeating the survey every year. Questionnaires were included in the Discover Maldon guide 2009 and readers were asked to post the questionnaire to Maldon District Council. A prize draw was offered as an incentive.

To date, there is a total sample of 33 responses.

2 VISITOR INFORMATION

The majority of respondents had heard about the Maldon District through a previous visit to the area (61%). However, a substantial number (23%) heard about Maldon through the brochure itself.

79% of respondents had visited Maldon before, compared to 21% who had never visited the Maldon District.
All but one of the respondents had visited or intended to visit the Maldon District. 39% of respondents said that their decision to visit was a direct result of receiving the brochure.

### Has your decision to visit been made as a direct result of receiving the brochure?

- **Definitely**: 39%
- **Probably**: 19%
- **Possibly**: 13%
- **Not at all**: 26%
- **Don't Know**: 3%

3 VISIT TO MALDON

Respondents were asked about the details of their visit to Maldon. In terms of the timing of the visit, the most popular time to visit was the summer months. The most popular months were June (44%), August (41%), May (38%) and July (31%). Respondents gave multiple answers to this question.

Only one respondent had visited or was planning to visit Maldon for their main holiday. On the whole, the brochure users were planning to visit Maldon for a short break or a day trip.
The majority of respondents (91%) were visiting Maldon for the purpose of leisure/holiday. The remaining respondents were visiting friends and relatives, on a shopping trip and visiting to do family history research.

![Pie chart showing visit types]

What best describes your visit to the Maldon district?

- Main Holiday: 3%
- Short break: 53%
- Day trip: 44%

The most popular types of accommodation when visiting Maldon are a caravan or camping site and serviced accommodation (i.e. hotels or guesthouses/B&Bs).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Accommodation</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hotel</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guesthouse/ B&amp;B</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caravan or camping site</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holiday park</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boat</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self catering</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends or relatives</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In terms of the length of stay, 50% were staying for three nights or less (i.e. short break length). However, the remaining 50% were staying for 4 nights or more, despite only one respondent planning their main holiday in Maldon. This suggests that the brochure users may be coming to Maldon for a secondary holiday that is slightly longer.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Nights</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 or more</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The majority of respondents had used or planned to use the car as their main mode of transport (68%). The remainder were planning to travel by public transport - 18% by bus or coach and 15% by train.

Each visiting group comprised an average of 2.9 people. The average number of adults per part was 2.45 and the average number of children was 0.48.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under 18</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 - 24</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 - 34</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35 - 44</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45 - 54</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55 - 64</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65+</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4 BROCHURE USERS ORIGIN

In terms of visitor origins, the majority of respondents were from Essex or North East London.
5 MARKETING AND PROMOTION

Respondents were asked about their general interests. The common themes were Countryside, Nature & Outdoor Activities, Arts & Culture and Heritage & History, followed by Food, Drink & Shopping.

In terms of media consumption, the newspapers and radio stations mentioned by respondents are shown below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Radio Stations</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Radio 4</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BBC Essex</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classic Fm</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio 5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio 2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio 3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio 7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dream 100</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heart Fm</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heartbeat</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lbc</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magic</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radio 1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time Fm</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Newspaper</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mail</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Times</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Paper</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telegraph</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guardian</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sun</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Express</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metro</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observer</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sport</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mirror</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Star</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The magazines that respondents read include:

- Countryfile
- Good Food
- Heat
- Prima
- Woman's Weekly
- Lady
- New Scientist
- Private Eye
- Country Life
- Steam Railways
- Suffolk Magazine
APPENDIX IV
RESIDENTS SURVEY
1 INTRODUCTION

This Appendix presents the findings of a survey of local residents visiting Maldon and Burnham-on-Crouch in July 2009. The survey consisted of a number of standard questions to explore the resident’s views and opinions. The aims of the survey were:

- To explore resident perceptions of the Maldon area as a tourism destination
- To understand the positive and negative impacts that tourism activity can have on the local community
- To help identify the strengths and weaknesses of the destination from the perspective of residents, to help understand the product/market fit

Face-to-face interviews were undertaken among a cross-section of residents. Interviews during this time resulted in 177 completed questionnaires. The survey was conducted on a simple random basis with interviewers asking the "next person to pass" if they would participate. In order to ensure consistency with the definition of a ‘resident’, filter questions were used to exclude visitors who did not live in the Maldon District.

2 OPINION OF MALDON AS A TOURISM DESTINATION

The majority of Maldon residents interviewed believe that the Maldon District is a tourist area (93%). By tourist area we mean an area that people visit for leisure, either for the day, a short break or holiday. Only 7% did not believe that Maldon was a tourism area.

Residents were asked about which features currently attract visitors to the Maldon District from a prompted list. The aim of this question was to help evaluate the features that residents believe are particularly attractive in the Maldon District. Residents were asked whether a particular feature attracted visitors to the Maldon District, and choose between ‘a lot’, ‘a little’ and ‘not at all’.

Residents believe that the most attractive features of the district are the friendly people (81% believe this attracts visitors ‘a lot’), the countryside and wildlife (77%) and the gardens and parks (75%). The features that least attract visitors to the district are the museums, galleries and theatres (22% believe this does not attract visitors at all) and the local events (21%).
Residents Survey - Features that are attractive to Visitors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>A LOT</th>
<th>A LITTLE</th>
<th>NOT AT ALL</th>
<th>DON'T KNOW</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Events</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visitor Attractions</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attractive buildings, architecture</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Museums, galleries and theatres</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coast &amp; Beaches</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gardens and parks</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td></td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friendly people</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td></td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locally produced food &amp; drink</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Countryside and wildlife</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td></td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Places to eat &amp; drink</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td></td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Legend:
- A LOT
- A LITTLE
- NOT AT ALL
- DON'T KNOW
Residents were asked whether there were any other features that were attractive to visitors. 12% of residents mentioned other features of Maldon, which included:

- Water-based activities (barges, boat trips and the river)
- The prom
- The park, and the good parking available there
- The splash park
- The history

In order to identify the strengths and weaknesses of Maldon as a destination, residents were asked what they thought was the best feature of Maldon for visitors and what was unique or distinctive about Maldon.

The most popular answers for the best feature of Maldon are listed below:

- The prom (92 mentions)
- The park (24 mentions)
- The history and quaintness of the town (19 mentions)
- The river (18 mentions) and the estuary (4 mentions)
- The maritime features i.e. the quay and harbour (15 mentions)
- The boats and barges (14 mentions)
- The countryside and wildlife (8 mentions)
- The small, individual shops (7 mentions)
- The coast and water (7 mentions)
- The friendliness of the people (3 mentions)

The most popular answers for what is unique or distinctive about Maldon are listed below:

- The barges (29 mentions) and the boats (8 mentions)
- The quaint, old fashioned character of the town centre (24 mentions)
- The river (11 mentions), the estuary (6 mentions), the coast ((5 mentions) and the marshes (4 mentions)
- The history (16 mentions)
- The prom (15 mentions)
- The park (9 mentions) and the splash park (5 mentions)
- Interesting and unusual shops (7 mentions)
- The quay (5 mentions)
- The small size (4 mentions)
- The friendly people (3 mentions)
- Good place for families (3 mentions)
Finally, residents believe that Maldon is a good place to visit, with 88% saying they would be very likely or likely to recommend it to someone else.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very Likely</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likely</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither likely or unlikely</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unlikely</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Unlikely</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3 LOCAL IMPACT OF TOURISM

One feature of sustainable tourism is that it generates greater economic benefits for local people and enhances the well-being of host communities, by improving working conditions and access to the industry. The survey of residents therefore looked to evaluate the extent to which local residents are satisfied with the impact of tourism on their community and on the local economy.

Residents were asked to rate the impact of tourism on various aspects of the area on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is 'Very Bad Effect', 3 is 'No Effect' and 5 is 'Very Good Effect'. Residents believe that tourism has a very positive effect on the following:

- Choice of Place to Eat and Drink (average score of 4.5)
- Range of attractions and leisure facilities (4.3)
- Condition of historic buildings and monuments (4.3)
- Shops that meet your needs (4.2)
- Local residents quality of life (4.1)
- Character of the local area (4.1)

However, residents are less positive about the impact of visitors on traffic levels (2.8) and availability of parking (3.2).
Residents Survey - Impact of Visitors on Maldon

- Local residents quality of life
- Character of the local area
- Choice of Place to Eat and Drink
- Litter
- Range of attractions and leisure facilities
- Condition of historic buildings and monuments
- Shops that meet your needs
- Condition of the natural environment
- Public transport provision
- Traffic levels
- Availability of parking
In order to assess whether residents felt that tourism generated economic benefits for the community, they were asked to what extent local businesses benefited from tourism. Residents identified that places to eat & drink, shops and attractions / entertainment venues as places that benefited a lot from tourism.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A LOT</th>
<th>A LITTLE</th>
<th>NOT AT ALL</th>
<th>DON'T KNOW</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attractions /</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>entertainment venues</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport providers &amp;</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>services (e.g. taxis,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>garages)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Places to eat &amp; drink</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shops</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thinking of the importance of tourism to the District in terms of the contribution to the local economy, the majority of residents believed that tourism is very important (81%) or important (11%). Only 4% believe that it is neither important nor unimportant, 1% believes it is not so important and 1% believes it is not important at all. 1% said they didn’t know.

Sustainable tourism has the potential to improve both the local quality of life and the visitor experience in the destination by providing more enjoyable experiences for tourists through more meaningful connections with local people. Looking at the cultural impact of visitors on the district, the majority of residents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that “visitors make the Maldon District more lively and fun”.

65
The residents’ survey also included questions to allow us to evaluate the performance of Maldon in terms of the performance indicators suggested by the Tourism Sustainability Group for the European Commission. Performance indicator 20 and 21 show the community acceptance and benefit from tourism. Performance indicator 20 is the percentage of residents indicating that they are satisfied with local impact of tourism. In Maldon 89% of residents agreed or strongly agreed with this statement.

![Table: Visitors make the Maldon District more lively and fun]

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither Agree nor Disagree</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t Know</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Performance indicator 21 is the percentage of residents believing that tourism adds to overall quality of life. When residents were asked at the beginning of the questionnaire, 76% believed that tourism had a good effect or very good effect on Maldon. Once the resident had been asked to consider the impact of tourism on local businesses and facilities for residents they were more positive. 94% agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that tourism in Maldon is important to the social, cultural and economic well-being of local people and businesses.

![Table: I am satisfied with the overall local impact of tourism]

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither Agree nor Disagree</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t Know</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

![Table: Tourism is important to the social, cultural and economic well-being of local people and businesses]

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither Agree nor Disagree</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t Know</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Residents were positive about the affect of visitors on the Maldon District, with 97% believing that visitors are good for the area.

**On the whole, do you think visitors are good for the area or bad for the area?**

- **Good for the area:** 97%
- **Bad for the area:** 2%
- **Don't know:** 1%

Very few residents believe that there are too many visitors to the Maldon District (2%). Residents either believe there are too few visitors (40%) or that there are the right amount of visitors (58%).

**Are there too few, the right amount or too many visitors in the Maldon District?**

- **Too few:** 40%
- **The right amount:** 58%
- **Too many:** 2%
APPENDIX V

BUSINESS AND STAKEHOLDER SURVEY
1 INTRODUCTION

The following section is a summary of the research undertaken to assess the impact of tourism on local businesses. This was achieved with a quantitative survey of all businesses that are potentially affected by tourism in the district and a series of in-depth telephone interviews carried out with a selection of organisations with a particular interest in tourism in Maldon.

2.1 INTRODUCTION - QUANTATIVE SURVEY

Questionnaires were mailed to a total of 188 local businesses, including accommodation establishments, visitor attractions, pubs, restaurants and shops. Email invitations were sent to a further 145 businesses, with a link to the online version of the survey. In total, 28 completed responses were received generating a response rate of 8% for the survey. The breakdown by type is shown in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Organisation</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hotel / Bed &amp; Breakfast</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self catering</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caravan &amp; Camping / Holiday Park</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Museum / Arts venue</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attraction</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference or Events Venue</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restaurant / Café / Take Away</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pub / Bar</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leisure / Sporting Facility or Club</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Place of Worship</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Event / Festival</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.2 IMPACT OF TOURISM

In order to assess whether businesses felt that tourism generated economic benefits for the community, they were asked to what extent local businesses benefited from tourism. Businesses identified that places to eat & drink and attractions / entertainment venues as places that benefited a lot from tourism. This was broadly similar to the results from the residents’ survey.
The questionnaire also evaluated the extent to which businesses thought different types of visitors were important in terms of the contribution to the local economy and their own business turnover.

Leisure visitors and visitors to local events were the most important to the local economy, according to the responses to the survey. Over three quarters of respondents said that visitors were very important or important to their own business turnover. It should be borne in mind that businesses may underestimate the impact of visitors on their business.
## Business Survey - Importance of Visitors to Maldon

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Visitors to Local Events</th>
<th>Contribution to local Economy</th>
<th>Contribution to Business Turnover</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leisure Visitors</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business events and conferences</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leisure Visitors</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Legend:
- Very Important
- Important
- Neither unimportant nor important
- Not so important
- Not important at all

![Chart showing the importance of visitors to Maldon in terms of contribution to local economy and business turnover across different types of visitors.](chart.png)
2.3 LOCAL EVENTS STRATEGY

Businesses were asked how effective they thought local events are at bringing leisure visitors to the district. The majority of businesses were positive about the effectiveness of local events, with 15% saying they were very effective at bringing leisure visitors to the district and 67% saying they were fairly effective. The remaining 19% thought that local events were fairly ineffective.

The questionnaire then assessed the type of local events programme that businesses would prefer to see in the Maldon district. 25% would prefer a small number of larger events that attract visitors in their own right, whereas 75% wanted a much wider spread of small scale events that contribute to the economy on a regular basis. 28% of businesses thought that the aim of the local events programme should be to enhance the number of visitors in the tourism season. The remaining 72% would prefer that local events aim to attract visitors during the ‘shoulder’ months.

2.4 TARGET VISITORS

Although certain markets provide the opportunity for quick-wins in terms of revenue generation, for sustainable growth and profitability it is important to focus on achieving a balanced visitor profile. The proposed marketing plan for the Maldon District aims to target a type of visitor that is often described as ‘the discerning visitor’, i.e. someone from an independent market who is a high spender and who is seeking new experiences and interested in the local culture and local produce.

Three quarters of businesses were positive about the impact that this type of visitor would have on their business turnover, with 29% saying that an increase would be ‘Very Beneficial’ for their business and 46% saying that an increase would be ‘Beneficial’. 6 respondents thought that an increase would be ‘neither detrimental nor beneficial’ and 1 thought it would be ‘very detrimental’.

Respondents commented that would prefer visitors who are interested in the historic character of Maldon, not ‘the bucket and spade brigade’. One respondent suggested targeting clubs and societies, such as:

- historic society members
- boating clubs
- photographic clubs
- artistic painting competitions and art and craft societies
Businesses commented that target visitors should be staying visitors, interested in green issues and farming, and a market that can give regular steady growth. Targeting coach trips was also suggested.

2.5 DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT

Businesses were asked what the major barriers and issues are that need to be addressed for tourism in the Maldon District to grow, with the ‘discerning visitor’ in mind.

- Better publicity or promotion, both in general and for special interest groups and for local events
- Better arts & cultural facilities and sports facilities
- Better local events, especially those that focus on local produce and benefit local businesses rather than outside traders
- Better class of accommodation and attraction, re-open the prom and lido
- More regular trade in out of season periods
- Improve the appearance of the high street e.g. the appearance of empty shops
- High business costs and rates, especially in the town centre
- Better geographical spread of visitors to benefit villages
- More support from Maldon District Council (e.g. a tourism officer, town centre manager, no more budget cuts to TIC) and the opportunity for businesses to represent their views (e.g. reconvene the Maldon Tourism Forum)
- More supportive Planning Department
- Some businesses commented that Maldon has wonderful attractions that visitors might not come across easily.

In terms of tourism infrastructure, the priorities for development included:

- A link between Maldon high street and the quay e.g. well signposted walking route
- Parking e.g. special Sunday rates, park and ride, drop off points for coaches
- Signage that is understandable for visitors, including brown signs to attractions
- Better transport infrastructure (e.g. rail links to Colchester and Chelmsford)
- Lack of high quality restaurants in the district
- Tourist Information to be provided on Sundays

From a prompted list, businesses were asked which aspects of Maldon required improvement. The aspects that businesses thought required improvement most were the
availability of parking, the public transport provision, the range of attractions and leisure facilities and the signage.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspects of Maldon District that require improvement</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Availability of parking</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public transport provision</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range of attractions and leisure facilities</td>
<td>14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Signage</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shopping environment</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cleanliness of the environment</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Choice of places to eat &amp; drink</td>
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<td>Traffic levels</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feeling of Safety</td>
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<td>Condition of natural environment</td>
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When asked to select one aspect that most requires improvement, the two clear priorities were the availability of parking and the signage.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect of Maldon District that most requires improvement</th>
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<tr>
<td>Availability of parking</td>
<td>8</td>
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<td>Signage</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Public transport provision</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cleanliness of the environment</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>Shopping environment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Choice of places to eat &amp; drink</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>Traffic levels</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feeling of Safety</td>
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<td>Range of attractions and leisure facilities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Condition of natural environment</td>
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2.6 BUSINESS SUPPORT AND PARTNERSHIPS

Maldon District Council aims to increase the value of tourism to the local economy, so businesses were asked what the Council’s priority should be in order to achieve this. The most important priority according to businesses is to promote the district.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priorities for the District Council</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marketing campaigns to promote the district</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local events planning and co-ordination</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local management of Tourist Information Centre</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contact with local providers</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-ordination with business groups</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delivery of advice about promoting to visitors</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring the performance of the industry in the District</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.1 INTRODUCTION - TELEPHONE INTERVIEWS

This report summarises the findings of a series of in-depth telephone interviews carried out with a range of organisations with an interest in tourism in Maldon District. A total of 19 interviews were conducted with business operators and membership organisations within the district, as well as public sector tourism professionals in adjacent districts.

The interviews sought to assess respondents’ views on the tourism product, the way in which it should be promoted and the role of the council in supporting and developing the tourism industry. Interviews were carried out between the 6th and 17th of July 2009, with each lasting between 20 and 30 minutes. The respondents were as follows:

Margaret Hance (TIC Manager) Maldon District TIC
Karen Turnbull Colchester Borough Council
Keith Williams, Secretary Maldon Chamber of Commerce
Glen Laing Maldon BNI
Nanette Wallace (TIC Manager) Chelmsford Tourist Information Centre
Claire Taylor Visitor Services Officer
Jim Marshall (Secretary) Maldon Yatch Club
Jo Stewart AB Hotels Limited
Ken Smith Crouch Valley Lodge
Sue Nelson Beeleigh Investments
Paddy Lacey Maldon District Museum
Peter Fenn Tillingham Fox and Hounds
James Phelan Phelan Barker
Tony Claydon Super Natural
Marilyn Bullivant Combined Military Services Museum
Helen Pascoe The Limes Guesthouse
Mrs Bass Althorne Hall Cottages
Samantha Longeran Dengie Food Trail
Janice Eastland Meadow Country Park

3.2 THE TOURISM PRODUCT

The first section of the questionnaire focussed on the tourism product, assessing its key characteristics and the elements that make it unique, as well as compiling a SWOT analysis.
With regard to the district’s characteristics as a tourism product there were a number of characteristics that were frequently mentioned. These included the maritime nature of the area, its heritage and history, and the quality of its landscapes.

When talking about the maritime nature of the district, respondents tended to focus on the estuarine features (specifically the rivers Blackwater and Crouch. They highlighted the importance of the district’s waterways and coastline in terms of both boating activities and the wildlife that they attract, as well as the relaxing atmosphere they create. As one respondent put it, “Water attracts people.”

Elements related to history tended to focus on the Vikings, Brithnoth and St Peter’s Chapel, but a number of respondents also drew attention to more recent history including the RAF and Bradwell Power Station. One said, “We have St Peter’s on the Wall and it is steeped in history. The RAF used to be based here.”

Landscapes were mentioned by a number of respondents. As one said, “We have the marshes, the Dengie and big East Anglian skies.”

What is interesting is that many of those interviewed completely overlooked the landscape. Perhaps this was a result of over-familiarity, but they didn’t seem to recognise the landscape’s role in creating an attractive tourism product.

Other elements mentioned included the independent nature of many of Maldon’s retail outlets, the architecture in many of the villages and both the barges and Promenade Park in Maldon.

As might be expected, most of these characteristics were seen as strengths. Most of those interviewed felt that the waterways and the impact they had on all aspects of the district were particularly important. Others pointed to the diverse nature of the villages found inland.

Other key strengths cited included the district’s location. “Our proximity to large conurbations such as London and Hertfordshire is a strength. It is such a different place to be and yet so close to get to from these places.”

Another felt that as a town, Maldon’s key strength was in relation to Maldon itself, one respondent suggested, “It is not on a direct railway line so it isn’t populated by commuters and therefore has an identity that is unique and can’t be found elsewhere.”
There were a few elements that were seen as weaknesses, in need of improvement. These included parking, transport links and the provision of accommodation.

A number of respondents felt that the lack of parking and current stringent enforcement practices had the potential to discourage repeat visits and could actually become a threat if not addressed. This related primarily to Maldon and Burnham, but wasn’t restricted to car parking, with some respondents mentioning issues with coach parking.

One respondent felt, “It’s a long standing issue and we should have free parking or more availability of parking to make it more attractive to people coming in.” Another interviewee said, “A while back they decided to put the cost of bus parking up to a level higher than in Windsor. This was crazy and has recently been addressed. We have now started to see a few more coaches come back, but this destroyed the group market in Maldon.”

The issue with parking is particularly important when considered in the context of public transport. A number of interviewees highlighted the lack of public transport and indicated that many visitors had little choice but to travel by car. With regard to public transport, one respondent suggested there is a need for, “Better public transport, especially at weekends as there are very few bus services.” Another pointed out that, “Maldon doesn’t have a train station and that is a major disadvantage.”

A number of those interviewed felt that a clear weakness was insufficient accommodation stock. This related to varied elements of the stock, from camping to high quality hotels. One respondent said, “Maldon hasn’t had a municipal campsite available, so that is needed as it will draw Dutch and northern Europeans in.” Another suggested, “I think Maldon District Council has limited resources to attract a more high value tourist as there are limited premium accommodation products. The people would come if we got the accommodation.”

The extent to which the district is currently promoted was also seen as a critical weakness, with one saying, “It is surprising how many people don’t know the area exists.” Whilst respondents recognised the value of the TIC for visitors once they are in the district, they suggested that there is a lack of proactive promotion in key catchment areas.

A guesthouse proprietor gave a specific example, saying, “When Chelmsford has the V festival we are very quite. You would think we would get an overspill. I asked the TIC and there isn’t any proactive promotion for this. For me a big event like this where people come from round the country gives us the chance to attract people.”
Interviewees were asked what their main priority would be if they were put in charge of the district’s tourism for the day. Various priorities were outlined but mainly related to promotion. “I would want to prioritise getting the message out there that Maldon has a unique quirkiness” suggested one. A second said he would, “Set up a system of contacting people bring tourists to the area,” suggesting that, “This was done very successfully 7 or 8 years but the funding was withdrawn.”

Others felt improved signage was a priority, with one saying, “One thing for me is the signage. We do know people come because of the signs, so if they were better we would get more.”

Finally, a number of others reiterated their issues with regard to parking and said that this should have top priority for the future.

When asked about unique selling points, many respondents highlighted the way in which the character of the district has been shaped by its estuarine nature. This related not only to the landscape, but the untouched nature of many parts of the district when compared to other areas. One respondent said, “It is a bit like the land that time forgot and that has its own attraction.” Another suggested that this gave the district a secret air, saying, “People almost want to keep it a secret, almost as if they have found a charmed existence.”

Previously cited as a strength, perhaps the most significant USP relates not to anything specifically unique, but rather to the fact that there is nothing similar within a smaller distance to major areas of population. As one put it, “There is almost a Norfolk effect but much closer to London.”

Respondents had a number of ideas when it came to identifying and exploiting opportunities for tourism within the district.

A number of those interviewed indicated that the most significant opportunity was that the district was currently underperforming when it came to tourism. “The number of tourists coming is far lower than it should be and as such there is significant potential. This is our greatest opportunity.”

In the context of the increasing trend for ‘staycations’ driven by both the recession and environmental awareness, this clearly does represent an opportunity as Maldon district has room to accommodate growth. “With people thinking about carbon footprint we have seen a definite increase because British people aren’t travelling abroad and they are staying in the UK” suggested one respondent, whilst another said, “I think the economy is a good thing as you will be having more tourism at home.”
Food was also identified as an opportunity, with an increasing desire amongst consumers to try foods with local provenance. One respondent said, “Seafood could be bought to the fore in Maldon in a big way,” and another echoed this saying, “Oyster fishing is good and the marketing around that is good,” whilst adding, “We have lots of hidden food treasures like Wilkin and Son down the road.”

In terms of food Maldon already has a massive opportunity in the form of Maldon Sea Salt. Remarkably despite its international reputation and the use of the word ‘Maldon’ within its brand, very few respondents identified Maldon Sea Salt as being an opportunity driver. In the way that Adnams and Southwold are inextricably linked, Maldon and its sea salt company could and should be looking to maximise the benefits associated with the Maldon Sea Salt brand. Southwold has become a magnet for wealthy visitors and Maldon has the potential to do the same. The one respondent recognising this potential suggested, “There is already a brand there in terms of Maldon Sea Salt - this is a premium product and cited by the major TV chefs.”

Some respondents felt that there was scope to increase business tourism. They felt more could be done to work alongside other businesses in the area to encourage greater numbers of business visitors. One suggested, “We need to get the district’s big businesses interacting with the tourism businesses.”

Another area for potential mentioned was water based tourism. A tourism officer in an adjacent district said, “In terms of its potential it could penetrate the marine market even more. It could actively target boat people. It could work with other marinas up and down the coast to get a marina trail. This encourages cycling and walking so also manages traffic.”

As far as threats were concerned, respondents didn’t feel that the district has too much to worry about. One concern that was raised a number of times related to withdrawal of funding for tourism marketing and the TIC. One interviewee said, “My worry has been the closure of the TIC, especially on a Saturday. They haven’t been able to get money for staff and I support them 100% but it is worrying.”

The interviews sought to understand how businesses felt that the industry could collectively work together to exploit opportunities and minimise threats. Most responses indicated that there was a clear need for greater partnership working in all areas. One interviewee said, “We need to look at how we are getting the word out together to make people interested. It is about communication - all of the partners could be working together.”
However, there was some suggestion that businesses should take the lead, with antipathy towards the District Council being a major issue. Whilst it seems that in the past the Council enjoyed a positive relationship with the business community, the vast majority of respondents indicated that this was no longer the case. Many felt that the Council’s actions hindered their ability to operate and that collective working simply wasn’t possible. This related to both tourism services and the wider services provided by the council.

In terms of tourism services, businesses felt that the Council had primarily made ill advised decisions with regard to funding (both in terms of cutting it and spending it in the wrong areas). Much of this criticism was levelled at councillors and respondents felt that many had their own personal agendas to the detriment of the tourism industry.

A second criticism came primarily from the Chamber of Commerce but was also mentioned by other interviewees. There was a suggestion that the Council had made efforts to replicate the role of existing business networks when it came to tourism rather than utilising what is already there. Respondents felt it was a case of reinventing the wheel and suggested that significant synergies could be achieved by combining forces. One operator said, “It shouldn’t be trying to compete. It needs to walk away from the notion that funding has to tick boxes and instead work with existing organisations.”

It appears that this perceived duplication has resulted in a withdrawal of goodwill. The Secretary of the Chamber of Commerce suggested, “The district council won’t work with businesses and most businesses won’t work with the council. We have taken the district council out of the equation.”

As far as wider Council services are concerned, a number of businesses aired grievances against the planning department in particular. There was a feeling that the planning department lacked the foresight to assess the impact of its decisions on the district’s economy and that it certainly didn’t represent something that could be described as a ‘service’. One respondent said, “With the planning department it isn’t a case of how we can help, it is a negative response every time.”

Some felt that the issues with the planning department could be overcome through greater internal communication and there was a sense that the Council lacks joined up thinking when it comes to tourism. One suggested, “They need to communicate more between departments.” Others felt that whilst a more proactive tourism department was required, there was little point if it didn’t work in harmony with other departments.

One participant suggested, “A tip would be to consult with other elements of the council. Do they have traffic management issues? What about planning?” Indeed, it is worth
considering a summit between the Council’s tourism professionals and those in other departments who make decisions that have an impact on tourism. Without a full understanding of wider council strategy, it will be difficult for the tourism team to genuinely develop the district’s tourism economy.

Whilst perceptions of communication issues relate mainly to communication between disparate Council departments, they are also apparent between those departments responsible for delivering tourism. Certain businesses suggested that the Council’s tourism offering suffered from deep-seated divisions between TIC staff and the Economic Development Team. This was something that was echoed by tourism professionals in the other districts and the fact that both they and businesses are aware of this is concerning.

To many respondents the fact that tourism promotion is overseen by the Economic Development team whilst the TIC is managed by Leisure Services seemed nonsensical in the extreme and it is hard to argue that this isn’t the case. Respondents recognised that both elements actually worked quite well in isolation and there was praise for the assistance provided to some tourism products by the Economic Development Team and for the expertise demonstrated by the team in the TICs. However, the two elements do not function in a cohesive manner and this is very much to the detriment of the tourism offering.

Indeed, the lack of cohesion appears to have created a degree of distrust on both sides, leading to further breakdowns in communication. To a certain extent this has amplified a situation where attitudes have become entrenched and it will be difficult to reverse this without compromise on both sides. The extent of this entrenchment was summed up by a respondent who suggested, “I understand there is a member of staff who has become quite a gatekeeper so it is hard to imagine how that might be progressed. That is not to say what she does isn’t good because it is very good.” Recognising the value of this particular individual's work whilst encouraging a change of attitudes will require improved communication and careful handling if their expertise is not to be lost.

Clearly not all of the criticism levelled at the Council was fair and businesses in any district will always have issues with their local authority. One respondent spent a significant amount of time detailing the Council’s failure to attract tourists and followed this up by saying, “They organised a massive festival using our council tax and then invited people from other districts to it. How dare they!”

Whilst such ignorance exists with regards to the work and role of the Council, the Council mustn’t use this to deflect what is clearly a deep rooted issue. It is evident that there are genuine issues of sufficient gravity to cause disquiet amongst the majority of businesses and
these need addressing if the Council is to win the backing of its tourism businesses (clearly an essential first step in developing the industry).

3.3 CUSTOMER TYPES AND ORIGINS

The interviews sought to assess the types of customer that businesses feel the district is and should be attracting. It appears that there are some fairly distinct groups currently visiting the district. Primarily these comprise families on the one hand and couples (young and old) on the other.

One respondent explained, “There are two types. The first is couples who come for a weekend to get away, walk and explore unusual things. They are ABs. There are also families who tend to base themselves in the caravan parks or perhaps the B&Bs. These are drawn from lower social grades.” A second respondent suggested that with regard to couples, “It attracts over 50s and young couples who want to escape. It is the ultimate getaway.”

A third respondent indicated that different people come at different times. “Pre-school holidays sees empty nesters visit. They spend more and look for different things to the families who come in the holidays and in summer weekends. In the autumn and winter you get more country-types.”

Families were often attracted because of connections to the area, either historical or through relatives living in the district.

A B&B operator identified an additional market, explaining that, “During the week the majority is business clients.”

When respondents were asked their views on attracting a higher spending audience, most felt this was a good idea but caution was urged on two fronts. One respondent summed up a common concern, saying “The ABs are looking for the more cultural side of tourism and we don’t have enough for them” whilst another warned against overlooking existing markets, saying, “If they aim for a new market they have to extend the potential and not ignore the people who are already coming.”

In terms of their geographical origins, visitors were largely seen to be drawn from the south. Generally respondents felt that the majority came from within a one hour drive time encompassing parts of London, South Essex and Hertfordshire. Many suggested there is
significant untapped potential to the north and west, with some highlighting a lack of understanding of Maldon’s tourism product anywhere north of Colchester.

One suggested, “People generally come from the south upwards. It is basically a case of South Essex visits North Essex” with another saying, “Anywhere from within an hour and a half and it tends to be from the south.” A third highlighted the lack of understanding amongst customers drawn from the north, explaining, “I think people don’t come down from the north as there are other things happening up north. Also we have people coming from Suffolk and Norfolk and they don’t know what is here.”

3.4 ROLE OF THE COUNCIL

Respondents were asked about the role of the Council and what they perceived the Council should be doing in order to maximise the value of tourism to the district. Primarily responses related to marketing. The TIC was seen as being the focus of council funding and whilst its role was roundly lauded it was seen as being reactive and there was a call for greater proactivity. Some suggested funding had been withdrawn for proactive tourism marketing.

Many felt that any marketing activity should have a fairly simple premise, suggesting, “We need to look at the markets we have that aren’t exploited rather than trying to attract a market that isn’t there” and “they should focus on promotion of what is already there.”

A few respondents expanded on this and made a case for the creation of themes, suggesting that the Council needed to work with operators to pull together packages and marketing to create specific products. One said, “There aren’t any products, they should look to manufacture products” whilst another felt that, “It wouldn’t take a great deal to sit down with a bit of paper and look at the various areas and see what is there that makes a coherent product.” Specifics included, walking, cycling, boating, bird watching and golf. In relation to the latter one said, “No-one has done it for golf and there are 22 golf courses in the area and no products.”

It was clear from responses that there was a desire to see value for money and evidence of how marketing budgets were spent. A hotelier said, “I don’t know where they spend the money at the moment,” whilst a B&B operator wanted, “Targeted marketing and feedback to say how many visitors that marketing has attracted.”

One respondent pointed to the requirement to increase the accommodation stock and indicated a role for the Council in this area. “It is not expanding its accommodation supply
and no-one is working on this. People need to shepherd prospective operators on their path."

### 3.5 CURRENT AND FUTURE MARKETING

Few were aware of current promotional activity and most of those indicating that they were aware, were then unable to accurately describe the covers of any of the current brochures of leaflets produced by the Council. One said, “I think they could do more. I wouldn’t know what the current brochure looked like.”

Of those that could, most felt that it was of a decent quality, with one suggesting, “It is quite good - it looks nice and has everything you need to know inside it.” However, the same respondent went on to say, “I don’t know how well it gets distributed.”

The website was cited by a few as being good and having potential. Most respondents felt that further work was required. “The new website needs more interaction and it needs to be more sophisticated. However it is quite easy to move around.”

One criticism levelled by a number of those respondents operating accommodation establishments related to Guestlink, with one operator suggesting, “I get hardly any business from at all. If I look at Late Rooms I am getting three or four a week as they are proactive.” Another suggested echoed this, “The number of bookings hasn’t outweighed the cost and I haven’t broken even. I am however very busy and none of these bookings have come through the Guestlink system. It is about twice as expensive as going on a commercial website.” It seems that operators would prefer to pay a percentage of income generated through any bookings through Guestlink rather than a one off fee. “I am happy to give late rooms 15%. Retaining 85% of something is much better than 100% of nothing and if the system worked that way the Council would generate an ongoing income and be rewarded for being proactive in terms of promoting the website.” It should be noted that it is free for an accommodation provider to use Guestlink to update their availability, which will then be shown on the Maldon District Council Tourism website. However, Guestlink do offer additional services, such as an ability to take online bookings via the accommodation providers own website, which incur a fee. There is no requirement for accommodation providers to use the additional services in order to show bookable accommodation on Maldon District Council’s website.

Most respondents were aware to some degree of the Council’s efforts to stage and promote festivals. Whilst the majority welcomed this, few felt that the festivals had a directly beneficial impact on their businesses in their present format. One respondent operating a
business that straddles both accommodation and attraction suggested, “They are going in the right direction by hosting the festivals, but they probably don’t publicise the attractions enough.”

Suggestions with regard to increasing the benefits focussed on expanding the festivals away from the main centres. There was also widespread support for creating packages, particularly with accommodation providers to ensure that festivals bring them some benefit. A B&B operator said, “Providing packages with accommodation is what they should be doing and have promotional deals in it such as 20% off. This would especially be good if the festivals were on a Friday night or Sunday night when we aren’t busy.”

One operator suggested that the businesses could have stands at each festival in order to make visitors aware of the tourism product, “I suppose we would need to have an active role and hand out leaflets and things.” Even if this didn’t have an immediate benefit, it may encourage visitors to return and use the businesses.

The interviews sought to identify what elements of the district’s character should be conveyed through any new brand. The main characteristics mentioned included maritime, heritage, rural, uniqueness and the untouched nature of the district. As one respondent put it, “It’s a sort of genuine, small riverside area offering individuality”

However, some respondents were keen not to rely too heavily on heritage. One suggested, “We seem to rely on the barges too much. Relying too much on its heritage is backward looking.” Others felt that it wasn’t their place to suggest which elements should be used within a brand for the district, believing it should be down to the perceptions of previous visitors, “It would be interesting to see what our guests would be looking for and focus groups with consumers would be a good idea. We need to know why people come here.”

When it comes to decisions about marketing, respondents perceived a lack of engagement. “If I was rating it out of ten I would say three” suggested one whilst, “I’ve never been asked” was a frequent comment (although most recognised and welcomed the fact they were being consulted as part of this exercise).

When asked what type of engagement they required, many respondents wanted open and honest communication, and more of it: “It needs to be more transparent and things should be publicised more in the local papers. Workshops are great, although they need to consider that people are working.” One respondent suggested, “An annual get together of businesses would be useful or some form of forum where we could raise issues face to face” with another believing that more communication would generate more proactivity on the part of businesses, “They could consult us more frequently on what needs doing and they
would get a better response. They need to talk to people.” Another echoed the need for a proactive approach by both sides, saying, “We need to understand their strategy and they need to understand ours.”

The final element of the interviews looked at the perceived importance of using environmental credentials in marketing. The majority of the respondents weren’t actively using their environmental credentials to promote their businesses. At the same time they didn’t feel it was necessary for the district to be promoted using messages focussing on the environmentally sound nature of its offer. The premise for this was that for the vast majority of consumers the environment is not a key driver when making purchasing decisions.

However, all respondents recognised that it was nonetheless important to indicate any positive environmental credentials in marketing material. It was felt that the environment is becoming increasingly important and although not at this stage a primary driver, it could make the difference when comparing two similar destinations or products. This was seen as something that has a particular importance to younger elements of the target market: “It’s definitely becoming more important now - we are a lot more conscious in the younger age group.” Another respondent felt it was most important to consumers drawn from higher social grades, saying, “I think it is a small percentage of the AB lot - although it is a growing percentage. It shouldn’t be ignored.”

One respondent pointed out that any promotion of green credentials had to be based around genuinely sound environmental practices. “By promoting that I think you are ticking the right boxes but it has to be real. The people in the jobs have to be able to talk the talk.”

### 3.6 OTHER FINDINGS

One issue that was apparent but not directly picked up by the questionnaire related to the geography of the district. It is very evident that many within Maldon itself are unable to separate the town from the district. They largely see the town as being the key element of the tourism product and seemingly find it difficult to identify the value in the tourism product in the wider district. Frequently these respondents drew the conversation back to Promenade Park and Maldon High Street, with one suggesting, “There isn’t much else here.”

There is certainly also a feeling that the District Council is rather to Maldon centric. A number of respondents based in the district’s other settlements felt their businesses were
ignored. They felt particularly aggrieved, suggesting that as residents they paid higher council tax than residents living in Maldon.

There was also a sense amongst those not operating in Maldon that their parts of the district were superior.

As one Burnham based respondent pointed out, “We have a station with direct links to London and our road links are better than Maldon’s. Maldon may be the main town as far as the council is concerned, but we believe we are better placed to take advantage of the potential shown by the tourism industry.”

Regardless of whether the issue of bias towards Maldon is real or perceived, there is clearly work to be done in order to engender a sense of unity across the district’s business community. Without this, it will be difficult to create a cohesive product from what is currently a fragmented tourism offering.

### 3.7 CROSS BORDER WORKING

As well as consulting businesses, interviews were conducted with tourism officers and TIC staff in surrounding districts. The aim was to assess their willingness to work with Maldon District Council on tourism promotion, as well as identifying where synergies could be gained through joint working.

Respondents were asked about the similarities and the extent to which the products complemented each other. One Colchester Borough Council employee felt there was a high degree of similarity in certain areas but felt further work was needed to identify joint product areas, suggesting, “We haven’t really explored it. There may be a shared Oyster tradition.” Another felt both had, “a certain amount of classic type experiences.”

One of the Colchester officers recognised the need to look across boundary when dealing with visitors, saying, “Visitors don’t care about local authority boundaries. There are some good links towards Maldon and we almost share Tiptree. We can send people out on bikes and we would happily send people over the border and expect the same back,” whilst their colleague indicated that she was, “Aware that as a town Colchester has to sell the hinterland.”

There was a similar recognition in Chelmsford: “It is all tit for tat. People will come into Chelmsford and go to Maldon and often people will stay in Maldon and come here.”
With regard to visitor types, there was a suggestion of some similarities: “We’ve felt that Colchester is quite strong in the empty nester/national trust type sector.” However, whilst there was a desire to maintain this market there was an indication that the Borough would be seeking to expand into new markets: “We have had a sustained campaign of trying to attract people from the 24 to 25 age groups.” Whilst the former is clearly suitable for Maldon and could lend itself to joint working, the latter is probably less appropriate. One element where the two areas share ambitions related to length of stay: “We know we are a day trip destination but aspire to be a short break one.”

When asked specifically how areas could work together there was a recognition that maritime and rural elements of the Colchester and Maldon areas could be marketed together, with one of Colchester’s officers saying, “In terms of short breaks and themes there is the Essex maritime connection,” whilst the other felt, “Waterborne tourism has potential.” One of them suggested, “There is lots of countryside that we could work together on.”

Chelmsford felt that joint working would be at a lower level, with the respondent suggesting, “We could work with their TIC as they are far more knowledgeable than us.” This would clearly be of less benefit to Maldon than to Chelmsford.

Certain issues were identified in relation to barriers to joint working. One of Colchester’s officers suggested that geographical focuses tend to be different: “The issue with working with Maldon has got to be that we are in the Haven Gateway and that doesn’t include Maldon. All of the other elements of the Haven Gateway have the maritime heritage and we would probably look there first.” The second Colchester based interviewee echoed this, suggesting, “To me I think Maldon people tend to gravitate more towards Chelmsford rather than Colchester so there hasn’t been much direct contact in terms of working together.”

One key issue relates to the different stages of development of the relative tourism products. Chelmsford’s is perhaps the least mature, whilst Colchester is significantly more developed than Maldon’s. There was a feeling in Colchester that Maldon needed to further develop its product before partnership working could genuinely benefit both parties. One officer said, “For Maldon it might be more visitor management issues. There will be capacity issues, particularly with Maldon and Burnham. Whilst we are going out quite gung-ho that wouldn’t be right for Maldon.” There was a feeling that Maldon’s first step should be to decide on a market and develop products before seeking to work across borders.

However, it was suggested that there was little political ambition to develop the tourism product in Maldon: “I have had a sense that they aren’t particularly ambitious in terms of
tourism at a political level. They just seem happy to keep things ticking over and it isn’t clear whether they actually want to develop the product.”

As with the business respondents, there was also recognition of issues within Maldon District Council. One respondent said, “It is pretty well known that the tourist office in Maldon isn’t particularly close to the tourism officer.” Whilst it was recognised that, “The TIC gives a great service” there was a suggestion that Maldon risked becoming isolated because of the reluctance of staff to update working practices: “TIC staff need to participate and not be resistant to change that the tourism officer wants to introduce.”

Interestingly one of the tourism professionals in Colchester Borough Council pointed to a relative lack of proactivity on the part of tourism businesses in Maldon, saying, “Accommodation providers from Maldon don’t advertise with us, whereas those from Tendring, Braintree and Babergh do.” It would be worth investigating why businesses are reluctant to engage and assess the extent to which this relates to perceived visitor origins.
APPENDIX VI
TOURISM BUSINESSES WORKSHOP
1 INTRODUCTION

This section summarises the results of a workshop that followed the in-depth interviews and quantitative research. The aim of the workshop was to engage with tourism businesses to allow the development of a vision for tourism in Maldon. It is essential that any vision developed for the area is based upon a collective agreement of the major stakeholders as something they will aspire to, and which is ultimately deliverable.

The workshop took place on Wednesday 15th July 2009 at the Five Lakes Hotel and Conference Centre. The participants were:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Organisation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mr John Jolly</td>
<td>Mangapps Railway Museum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr Lacey</td>
<td>Maldon District Museum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Lowe</td>
<td>Museum of Power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terry Bradley</td>
<td>Museum of Power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Mann (Owner)</td>
<td>The Limes Guesthouse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Ken Smith plus colleague</td>
<td>The Crouch Valley Lodge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs Bass</td>
<td>Althorne Hall Cottages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samantha Longeran</td>
<td>Dengie Food Trail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Janie Robinson</td>
<td>Osea Leisure Park</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2 RESULTS

2.1 THE TOURISM PRODUCT

What makes Maldon District Maldon District? (15 minutes) SLIDE 1
Ask participants to brainstorm the key elements of Maldon District’s tourism product - good and bad.

River Barges
Old fashioned high street
River crouch navigation/canals - boating community
Bird watching
Golf
Rambling/Cycling
Sailing
Motorcycling in Burnham
Landscapes (views, flat, undulating, dry, sunset, rural, unspoilt)
Access from large urban areas
Heritage/history - Britnoth
Open skies
Old fashioned
Sedate
Set in its ways
Beautiful
Participant SWOT exercise (10 minutes) - SLIDE 2

Based on the results of the first exercise encourage participants to outline which elements of the district’s tourism product represent strengths and what the main weaknesses are

- What do you think that the district’s main strengths are?
  As above
  TIC has good contact with providers (well respected)

- Weaknesses
  Boating - boaters don’t get off the boats or spend money in the district
  Poor standard of accommodation
  Railway not promoted/insufficient public transport - esp. to rural areas - weekend railway engineering, too much reliance on cars
  Quantity of accommodation
  Lack of co-ordination and joined up marketing esp. around events
  Signage - brown signs and main signage
  TIC very passive, don’t seek extra information
  TIC lack of funding
  TIC opening hours esp. weekends
  Lack of facilities - esp. toilets, ice cream kiosk at Bradwell
  Plenty of attractions, but none has achieved its full potential

Retail

Weaknesses relating to council
  Don’t promote theme based activities e.g. golf
  Don’t link attractions with accommodation
  Lack of promotion
  Planning department “the answer is no, what’s the question?” - slow and negative approach to tourism
  Lack of dedicated tourism officer since Russell Dawes left
  Lack of tourism policy
  Don’t understand the product
  Don’t value tourism as an economic driver
  Lack of support to help businesses develop
  Lack of understanding of the impact that their decisions have on businesses
  EU funding - don’t exploit EU funding opportunities
  Not supporting the development of facilities

Unique Selling Points (5 minutes)

NB: Some USPs aren’t fully exploited

Power Station - visitor attraction
Barges
Proximity to centres of population - Southend, London, Chelmsford, Harwich
Food and Drink (Maldon Salt)
Nature/Bird watching/Wildlife/Wetland/Marshes
Walks
Horse Riding/Trekking
Museum of Power
Coastline close to London
Longest seawall in the country
Blackwater/Crouch/Estuaries
Canals/River Trips
Seals
Trips to the islands
Themes (5 minutes)
Water
Walking/Cycling
Sport (boating, golf, equestrianism)
Nature

2.2 THE BRAND

Target Audience (10 minutes)
Attract higher spending visitors by:
Car hire
Road system made better
Improve accommodation offer/quality of hotels
Joint promotion of attractions
“We have what you want”

Brand Essence/Straplines (15 minutes)
You’ll be surprised at what you find
Hidden treasures
So much to do; time to unwind
Heritage and variety
Freedom to unwind in our heritage
Sky, sea and landscape and lots more
Maldon District – a land of surprises
Welcome to old England within one hour of London
Good food, good wine, all locally produced
Indulge in history
Get close to nature in the Dengie
Have a surprise close to London

2.3 PRIORITIES AND DELIVERY

Business needs/Council priorities (10 minutes) - SLIDE 3
Proactive promotion (7 people highlighted it as a priority)
Creating joined up packages (4)
Dedicated and proactive tourism officer (3)
TIC open at weekends (3)
Better website (2)
Improved signage of all types (2)
Improved planning policy to help business growth (2)
Help with rates (2)
Knowledge of the area (2)

Council Mission Statement (10 minutes)
Needs the word ‘will’
Need aims and actions behind the mission statement
Leisure not holiday destination
Must be backed by actions
Supporting not assisting
Too long at the moment
Should say something about raising awareness
Just do it!
APPENDIX VII
MALDON TOURISM PRODUCT AUDIT AND MAPPING
1 INTRODUCTION

One aim of the research was to identify the tourism products available in the Maldon District. An audit was undertaken using various sources, including:

- The regional Destination Management System
- Internet directories e.g. www.yell.com
- Websites for individual businesses
- Database of premises licenses in Maldon, from Maldon District Council Licensing Department
- Maldon District Council promotional material

The overall breakdown of businesses and organisations that may be of interest to visitors to the district are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accommodation</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attraction</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference Venue</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leisure Facility</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Place of Worship</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pubs, Clubs &amp; Bars</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restaurant/Café</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sporting Facility</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Accommodation providers fall into the following categories:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grading</th>
<th>Bed &amp; Breakfast</th>
<th>Caravan &amp; Camping</th>
<th>Hotel</th>
<th>Self Catering</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 star</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Star</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Star</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Star</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not in Scheme</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Attractions fall into the following categories:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attraction Type</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Art Gallery</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country Park</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garden</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heritage/Visitor Centre</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historic Monument/Archaeological Site</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leisure/Theme Park</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Museum</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature Reserve/Wetlands/Wildlife</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Historic/Scenic/Transport operator</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scheduled Ancient Monument</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Maldon District also hosts a range of events that could be of interest to visitors to the District. The breakdown of events in the Maldon District is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Events in the Maldon District</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Art Exhibition</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Car/Motorcycle Rally</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children's Activity</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christmas Event</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dance - Traditional</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Festival</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Film</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gardening Event</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Event</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guided Walk/Tour</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Market</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Railway Event</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sporting Event</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talk</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walking Event</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workshop/Course</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month of Events</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2 PRODUCT MAPPING

The pages that follow show the spatial distribution of Maldon’s Tourism products. This will highlight any gaps which could be used to provide evidence for potential future development.
BUSINESS PROVISION IN MALDON DISTRICT

[Map of Maldon District showing various business provisions marked with different symbols for accommodation, conference & meeting facilities, culture & heritage, food & drink, nature & recreation, retail, and sports facilities.]
BUSINESS PROVISION IN SOUTHMINSTER AND BURNHAM-ON-CROUCH
CLOSE UP LOOK AT BURNHAM-ON-CROUCH
CLOSE UP LOOK AT MALDON TOWN
TOURIST ACCOMMODATION PROVISION IN MALDON DISTRICT
TOURIST ACCOMMODATION PROVISION IN MALDON AND SURROUNDING AREA
### VISITS TO VISITOR ATTRACTIONS IN MALDON DISTRICT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attraction</th>
<th>CRU</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>2002</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maldon District Museum</td>
<td>U</td>
<td>Museum/Art Gallery</td>
<td>3,000</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>2,005</td>
<td>1,739</td>
<td>1,834</td>
<td>1,730</td>
<td>1,800</td>
<td>2,085</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Museum of Power</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>Museum/Art Gallery</td>
<td>#N/A</td>
<td>#N/A</td>
<td>#N/A</td>
<td>8,360</td>
<td>#N/A</td>
<td>#N/A</td>
<td>#N/A</td>
<td>9,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burnham-on-Crouch Museum</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Museum/Art Gallery</td>
<td>#N/A</td>
<td>#N/A</td>
<td>#N/A</td>
<td>#N/A</td>
<td>3,000</td>
<td>3,400</td>
<td>3,600</td>
<td>4,010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combined Military Services Museum</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Museum/Art Gallery</td>
<td>#N/A</td>
<td>#N/A</td>
<td>#N/A</td>
<td>#N/A</td>
<td>5,000</td>
<td>6,000</td>
<td>5,000</td>
<td>#N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POWER</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>Museum/Art Gallery</td>
<td>#N/A</td>
<td>#N/A</td>
<td>#N/A</td>
<td>#N/A</td>
<td>8,500</td>
<td>9,000</td>
<td>9,000</td>
<td>#N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural Discovery Church</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Places of Worship</td>
<td>#N/A</td>
<td>#N/A</td>
<td>#N/A</td>
<td>#N/A</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thames Barge Heritage Centre</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Visitor/Heritage Centres</td>
<td>#N/A</td>
<td>#N/A</td>
<td>#N/A</td>
<td>#N/A</td>
<td>10,826</td>
<td>#N/A</td>
<td>#N/A</td>
<td>#N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saint Peters-on-the-Wall</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Places of Worship</td>
<td>#N/A</td>
<td>#N/A</td>
<td>#N/A</td>
<td>#N/A</td>
<td>#N/A</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>11,000</td>
<td>12,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maeldune Heritage Centre</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Visitor/Heritage Centres</td>
<td>#N/A</td>
<td>#N/A</td>
<td>#N/A</td>
<td>#N/A</td>
<td>#N/A</td>
<td>#N/A</td>
<td>14,435</td>
<td>14,612</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: VisitBritain’s Annual Visitor Attractions Survey (see Bibliography)

Notes:
1. *The survey was carried out by means of a self-completion questionnaire mailed to all known English visitor attractions*
2. *#N/A indicates a year when the attraction did not provide visitor data to the Visitor Attractions Survey*
3. *CRU indicates whether the attraction is in a Coastal, Urban or Rural location*
APPENDIX VIII
MALDON TOURISM PRODUCT
MYSTERY VISITOR RESEARCH
1 Introduction

This report has been produced as part of the Mystery Shopper Audit service offered by East of England Tourism.

The Mystery Shopper Audit covers areas under the control or influence of the local authority that are important to the quality of the visitor experience (a visitor may be a tourist on holiday, a day tripper or even a shopper). The aim of the audit is to provide information useful to those involved in destination management.

The aim of the original report (carried out in 2003) was to provide a starting point from which areas in need of improvement, and strong points useful for marketing could be identified. It was broken down to provide detailed information on each of the criteria evaluated during the visit. This report has been similarly laid out, but should be used in conjunction with the original. When producing this report, the decision was taking not simply to reproduce similar text, rather to write about what has changed and where improvements are still needed. As such, this report assesses progress (positive or negative) in relation to the original audit. It is worth noting that in many cases, the majority of the aspects covered by the audit remain unchanged. The location and style of certain elements of each town are obviously the same and as such, the report doesn’t go into detail with regards to their suitability unless changes have been made.

The first section of the audit report looks at the ‘core’ criteria and best practice guidelines for quality. The criteria and guidelines have been formulated based on population categories, with 5 categories available to cover towns with a population from 2,000 to 200,000. These categories are based on previous research of visitor expectations and studies of facilities found in towns across the East of England. Results of the visits are then assessed in the context of the relevant criteria during the second section.

The audit involved 3 visits to Burnham on Crouch and Maldon in Essex. These were carried out by an assessor acting as a visitor. During the visits facilities such as toilets, car parks and the shopping environment were ‘experienced’ and the quality of the ambient and built environments assessed. The assessor was required to mark the town on a range of indicators, based around the core criteria and best practice guidelines. For each indicator scores were provided based on their presence, their quality and their suitability to the surrounding environment.

Scoring has been carried out using the core criteria and best practice guidelines as a benchmark. Any indicator assessed as being part of the core criteria will always be marked in terms of its presence. If a core criteria indicator is present it will then be awarded marks based on the extent to which it meets the best practice. Generally indicators are marked on a scale of 1 to 5, although 0 is awarded if a core criteria indicator is absent.

Many aspects of the ambient and physical environment in a town will be largely out of the control of the local authority. It is unlikely that the authority would be able to change the
layout of the town, have control over the range of goods within individual shops or influence the attitudes and behaviour of the people working in them. The best practice advice presented within this report has taken these factors into account and looks specifically at aspects that can be altered or affected by the actions of the local council or partnership organisations.

Burnham on Crouch falls into Category A (towns with populations of up to 10,000), whilst Maldon falls into Category B (towns with a population size of between 10,000 and 20,000). As such the report has been divided with the Core Criteria & Best Practice and Audit Results sections for Burnham on Crouch presented prior to the Core Criteria & Best Practice and Audit Results sections for Maldon.

It should be remembered that this report does not assess the quality of the actual tourism product, rather the standard of amenities and infrastructure that visitors can expect when they arrive.

All possible efforts have been made to ensure the highest possible levels of accuracy are contained in this report, but it must be remembered that it is based only on three visits to each town.
2 CATEGORY A SECTION 1 CORE CRITERIA & BEST PRACTICE

I GENERAL

First impressions are all important. Visitors will often base their opinion of a town on their arrival experience. Not only is it essential that visitors can find their way to the town centre or local attractions, they should also be able to park quickly and easily and not be alienated by the cost of parking. A clean and tidy appearance will go a long way to creating a positive visitor experience. It is also essential that visitors are provided with information to enable them to find their way around the town. They should be able to expect a safe and welcoming atmosphere. Street furniture such as benches and litter bins should be provided and must be well maintained in order to ensure a positive impression.

This section includes:
- Signage
- Parking
- Information Boards
- Open Spaces & Floral Displays
- Street Furniture
- General Security
- Cleanliness
- Pavements

**Signage**

It is important that visitors can find their way both to, and around a town. Road and pedestrian signs can help ease the visitor’s arrival.

There should be:
- Signs indicating arrival on approach roads to the town.

There could be:
- Clear road signs to the town centre and brown signs to main attractions (if applicable);
- Pedestrian signs pointing the way to major attractions, shopping streets, car parks and leisure facilities.

The signs could be:
- Clearly legible;
- At a suitable height - it is important that signs are not obstructed and that they are visible to approaching motorists;
- Of uniform design - this could include similarity of font, colour and basic style.

Added quality can be achieved by incorporating the local coat of arms or council logo;
- Free from dirt and graffiti.
Parking
Ease of parking, car park design and the cost of parking are all important. Visitors should be able to find spaces close to the town centre relatively easily. The design should facilitate easy and safe movement of traffic and pedestrians within the car park. Provision should be made for various types of visitor and vehicle. Cost at conveniently located short stay car parks will be relatively price insensitive, assuming the car parks do not compete with free parking. However, charges should reflect the location, security and quality of the car park. Car parks or street parking should also be located close to an area attractive to visitors, i.e. the high street.

There should be:
• Provision for parking either through car parks or street parking.

Car parks and areas of street parking should:
• Be easy to locate and enter from the local street network;
• Be secure with all areas visible to passers by;
• Be well lit. Lights must be thoughtfully placed to provide security and safety for pedestrians;
• Be clean and tidy with well maintained hard surfaces.

There should be:
• Spaces for disabled motorists.

There could be:
• Spaces for parents with children, and motorbikes;
• Direct and signed pedestrian routes from the car parks to the town centre, segregated from traffic routes;
• Clear indications of one way or directional systems;
• Visible deterrents against vandalism and theft such as CCTV cameras or warning signs.

Spaces may be used most freely by the visitor if they:
• Conform to the minimum standard length of 4.8 metres, with a width of 2.4 metres for normal spaces and 3.6 metres for disabled and parent spaces. Disabled and parent spaces should be clearly signposted and marked with yellow lines and wheelchair symbols, and close to pedestrian walkways. Motorbike spaces should also be marked and signposted;
• Are clearly delineated.

Charges should:
• Be clearly indicated along with time limits and complaints procedures (if there are no charges this should also be clearly indicated);

Charges could:
• Be scaled to reflect the proximity of the car park to the town centre or main attractions;
• Levied on exit.
Where applicable, pay and display machines should:

- Give change;
- Be free from obstruction, dirt or graffiti.

Visitors may expect staff at payment booths to be:

- Appropriately dressed, polite and efficient.

Open Spaces & Floral Displays

Open spaces such as gardens and parks, along with floral displays can be important to the quality of the visitor experience. Whilst not essential, they help to make towns more aesthetically pleasant.

Where present open spaces should have:

- Litter bins, furniture such as benches, lighting and hard surface pathways.

A visitor will expect open spaces to be:

- Well maintained, with tidy borders;
- Free from rubbish;
- Safe, with a feeling of security. Ideally there should be security features such as CCTV.

Visitors will appreciate floral displays that are:

- Well maintained, free from weeds and litter;
- Clearly visible along main routes or in central locations.

Street Furniture

Street furniture such as benches, litter bins and fences all help to improve the visual aspect of a town.

Furniture should:

- Include litter bins, benches and street lights.

Its presence will be enhanced if it:

- Is hard standing (grass may become worn leading to the formation of puddles in winter) and free from obstruction;
- Is free from dirt and vandalism;
- Is well maintained.

Litter bins should

- Be regularly emptied and generally clean.

Bus stops

Bus stops are likely to be frequently used by visitors.

Bus stops should have:

- Up to date timetables.

They could also include:

- Details of fares and contact numbers for relevant bus companies;
• Automated signs indicating the estimated time of arrival of the next bus;
• Some form of shelter. Any shelter should be safe, well maintained and free from dirt and vandalism.

**General Security**

**Towns should:**
• Have visible deterrents to crime or vandalism.

**These could include:**
• Closed circuit television;
  A regular police presence:
• Warning signs.

**Cleanliness**

Cleanliness refers to the general appearance of the town in terms of tidiness and lack of litter.

**The town should be:**
• Tidy in appearance with no visible litter;
• Free from dirt and vandalism.

## II THE MARKET

Street markets add to the range of retail facilities available, they also provide colour and culture and are often closely associated with local tradition. This section is relevant to a range of markets including, general produce markets, flea markets, antique markets or farmers markets.

**This section includes:**
- **Location**
- **Range**
- **Presentation**

**Location**

Markets may attract a greater number of visitors if they are located in an area which benefits from good pedestrian access, proximity to retail outlets and close parking facilities.

**To attract visitors the market could be:**
• Centrally positioned in an area easily accessible to pedestrians;
• Adjacent to or in the proximity of other retail facilities;
• Within a short distance of car parks.
Range
The range of stalls should be varied and present visitors with an alternative to retail outlets.
The range should:
• Complement and enhance current retail provision.

Presentation
Street markets can often appear untidy, particularly towards the end of the day. It is important that the general level of presentation of stalls and goods is high.
The market should:
• Contain sufficient provision for refuse disposal.
Ideally it should:
• Allow freedom of movement for wheelchairs and pushchairs;
• Be tidy and have well maintained stalls with thoughtful presentation of goods.

III RETAIL PROVISION

Most visitors to a town will come into contact with retail facilities. The range of shops and physical condition of the shopping environment will all be important. The existence of specialist shops is also important and can greatly add to the visitor experience, even providing a reason to visit a particular town - for example, certain towns such as Coggeshall in Essex, benefit from the agglomeration of antiques shops.

This section includes
Range
Shopping Environment

Range
The range of shops on offer is very important. A visitor will be impressed if the range of outlets is varied and offers choice.
There should be:
• A mix of chain and independent stores.
This could include shops for:
• Clothes, shoes, entertainment products, electrical products, books and hardware;
And a:
Butcher, fishmonger, baker, newsagent, chemist, bank, hairdresser and a Post Office.

Shopping Environment
It is important that the shopping environment is pleasant and safe.
The ambiance of the shopping area will be improved if:
There are suitable and well maintained security features (creating a general feeling of security);
- Streets and pavements are clean;
- Shop fronts are well maintained and well presented.

IV CATERING FACILITIES

As with retail facilities, visitors are also likely to use catering facilities such as restaurants, cafes or takeaways. Again, the range and physical condition of catering facilities will be all important.

This section includes
- Range
  - External Physical Condition

Range

Visitors should be able to expect:
- An appropriate provision of catering establishments relevant to the location and surroundings.

Visitors are unlikely to enter a catering establishment unless its external features are well maintained.

External fittings and fascias should be:
- Well maintained, clean and free from vandalism.

‘A’ boards should be:
- Well maintained, clean and free from graffiti. They should not obstruct passers-by (especially those with impaired mobility) or traffic and be suited to their surroundings.

V TOILETS & BABY CHANGING FACILITIES

Toilets should be easy to find, clean and in working order.

This section includes
- Presence
- Location
- Layout and Design
- Fixtures and Fittings
- Baby Change Facilities
- Maintenance and Cleanliness
**Presence**

All towns should have:

- Toilets open to the public;
- Toilets accessible to disabled people.

**Location**

Toilets and baby changing facilities should be:

- Signposted.

Visitors may expect toilets and baby changing facilities to be:

- Easy to find, close to the central shopping area.

**Layout and Design**

Consideration should be given to the ease with which the visitor can use the facilities.

The layout of the toilets could be designed to provide:

- Easy access to all areas, such as cubicles, washbasins and hand dryers - these fixtures should also be easy to use;
- Lighting appropriately positioned (such as above mirrors and over cubicles) to allow easy use of all areas;

**Disabled toilets could be designed to include:**

- Furniture that facilitates ease of use - this could include the provision of hand rails and large cubicles.

**Fixtures and Fittings**

A higher standard of quality may be achieved where a greater range of fixtures are provided and the quantity of fixtures is sufficient for visitor numbers.

Fixtures and fittings should include:

- Hand drying facilities, sanitary towel disposal facilities, toilet rolls and soap;

They could also include:

- Mirrors, waste bins, flat surfaces, toilet roll holders and hooks in cubicles.

Appearance can be enhanced if the fixtures and fittings are:

- Of high quality and matching;

And toilets incorporate the use of:

- Sensor taps, sensor flush urinals, dual flush WCs and low energy light bulbs.

**Baby Change Facilities**

Increasing emphasis is being placed on baby changing facilities, with parents looking to take babies on shopping and leisure trips. Any town providing toilets should consider providing baby changing facilities.

**Baby change facilities could:**
• Be available and accessible to both sexes, either within male and female toilets or as a separate area;
• Include hygienic and secure changing surfaces with safety straps and disposable covers;
• Provide suitable waste bins (i.e. with secure, sprung lids) along with nappy sacks and ideally nappy vending machines;
• Include a WC for parent use and a baby seat;
• Contain a separate room for baby feeding.

**Maintenance and Cleanliness**

Visitors may expect all public toilets to be well maintained and clean.

**Toilets and baby change facilities should have:**

• Clean facilities (areas above and below eye level should be clean) with evidence of regular hygiene checks (for example a sign detailing cleaning rotas and the time of the last check).

**It is reasonable for the visitor to expect:**

• Well maintained fixtures and fittings;
• Well ventilated, fresh smelling facilities.

**The toilets may be enhanced by:**

• The provision of automatic aerosol dispensers.

**Visitors may appreciate:**

• A sign giving contact details for those responsible for cleaning in case of problems.

**VI INFORMATION PROVISION**

The provision of good quality information not only helps to attract people to a town, it also enhances the quality of their visit.

Whilst not essential in smaller towns, the tourist information centre will often be central to a visit. It is important that TIC staff are well briefed, polite and able to use their initiative to deal with any request for information about the locality.

Information boards can be used to provide a useful reference point for visitors on arrival. Thought must be given to the positioning of boards to ensure they are easy to find.

It is important that information provided at the TIC, on information boards or on web-sites is professionally produced, relevant to the visitor and comprehensive.

**This section includes:**

- Tourist Information Centre - comprising:
  - Location, Decor, Layout & Ease of Access
  - Opening Times
  - Information Range
Tourist Information Centre

It is important that the TIC is in a central location that is easy for visitors to find. Thought should be given to the layout to ensure all areas are accessible to disabled people and visitor flow is efficient. Visitors will expect the TIC to be clean and well maintained.

The TIC should:
- Be well sign posted - this could include pedestrian signs from the main car parks as well as road signs from the edge of town;
- Provide access for the disabled with ramps and railings.

It is important that:

The layout aids efficient visitor flow and facilitates freedom of movement for the disabled. Leaflet or product racks should not be located in positions that will hinder movement such as by the door or till.

Throughput may be increased if the TIC is:
- Centrally located, close to retail outlets and parking facilities;
- Easy to find within the local street plan;

Quality can be enhanced if:
- The TIC is clean and well maintained both inside and out.

A TIC is of more benefit to visitors if it is open at convenient times.

The TIC should be open:
- Throughout the week, with opening hours reflecting the volume and flow of visitors;

This could include:
- Opening for significant periods at weekends;
- Longer opening hours during the summer.

Tourist Information Centre - Information Range

The quality, clarity and range of information provided is important.

The TIC should provide:
- A wide range of leaflets or brochures covering the main attractions, accommodation establishments, transport systems and surrounding towns and villages.

The range can be enhanced by:

Providing free maps - these will be appreciated by the visitor, increasing the likelihood that they will see more of the town.
**Tourist Information Centre - Service**

First impressions count and the importance of well trained staff cannot be understated. The attitude and efficiency of staff when dealing with customers, especially in how they acknowledge and serve visitors, and how well queries are dealt with, will impact greatly upon the quality of the visitor experience. Staff may not need to be in complete uniforms but should be easily identifiable and this could be achieved with the use of suitable clothing or name badges. It is important that staff have sufficient knowledge to provide the information requested by the visitor or advise them of an alternative source.

The visitor should be able to expect:

- A polite greeting rather than a curt ‘yes’, followed by an efficient level of service.

Staff should:

- Be knowledgeable, able to give directions and provide information that may not otherwise be available in leaflets.
- Be able to provide advice on where to go and which sources of information are most useful

**Information Boards**

Information boards not only provide a useful reference point on arrival, they can also supply information when the TIC is closed. In smaller towns they may even be used instead of a TIC.

Boards should be:

- Present and located where clearly visible to arriving visitors;
- Suited to their surroundings.

To ensure ease of use they could:

- Be hard standing on a surface such as Tarmac or concrete (a grass area will soon become worn and retain water);
- Be positioned at an appropriate height and at an angle that doesn’t retain rain water or snow, or glare in bright sunlight - the material used for the board will also be important in terms of its retention of water and the extent to which it reflects sunlight;
- Be well lit, either by general street lighting or dedicated lights;
- Be legible with large print for those with impaired vision;
- Be clean and free from vandalism.

**Other Sources of Information**

Visitors may need to obtain information about a town before they visit. By providing print and electronic media that is available prior to a visit, the quality of the visitor experience may be enhanced.

Brochures should be:

- Professionally produced on good quality paper;
- Of a manageable size and clearly presented allowing information to be easily read;
Web-sites should:
- Be well designed to allow easy navigation;
- Be up to date with no outdated or incorrect information;
- Provide details of other relevant contact methods such as addresses and telephone numbers.

Brochures could include:
- Details of the main attractions in the locality;
- Maps of the area with driving directions to the town from all major roads.

Ideally, the front cover should:
- Feature a logo and title, both of which are visible when racked.

Web-sites could include:
- Downloadable maps;
- Photographs of the locality (any photos should include captions);
- Links to other relevant web-sites including attractions, transport providers, accommodation providers, restaurants and local authorities.

Visitors will find maps most useful if they:
- Are to scale (clear indications of the scale provided);
- Show road, rail and pedestrian routes (such as town trails);
- Show the location of car parks and information sources such as the TIC or information boards.
3 SECTION 2 AUDIT RESULTS

Total Score:
Burnham on Crouch  75%

Extent to Which Core Criteria Met:
Burnham on Crouch  83.3%

1 GENERAL

Total Section Score:
Burnham on Crouch  69%

Signage - Burnham on Crouch - Score 91%
Arrival signage is of a very high quality, featuring a sailing themed illustration, the name of the town, its twin town name (including a French flag) and the words, ‘please drive carefully’ in a calligraphic type font. The same signs are positioned on both the B1010 and B1021 and at the foot of each is a flower bed. On the occasion of all visits the signs were clean.

There is no town centre signage, but this isn’t warranted given the size and layout of the town.

Pedestrian signage is generally of very high quality, in a black, ornate style. It is well maintained and very clean. There is also a fairly significant amount of pedestrian signage, which certainly makes it easy for visitors to find their way around.
Parking - Burnham on Crouch - Score 83%

The car park off Ship Road is reasonably well signposted but both the surface and delineation are relatively poor. As the picture below demonstrates, there are two disabled spaces of a reasonable width (although they share the excess space provided and they could be remarked to ensure they are industry standard width) and whilst both are conveniently positioned, they are not particularly clearly marked. Lighting is poor and there is no CCTV, but the car park feels secure, being surrounded by housing. The car park provides excellent value, being fee free.

There is also a reasonable amount of on street parking in the centre of town on the B1021, available for periods of two hours (including dedicated disabled spaces). However, whilst this was reasonably accessible during weekdays, it was generally very difficult to find a space at the weekend.

There is further parking available in the Riverside Park area. As well as a small car park situated at the start of the road leading to Riverside Park, there is also further parking at the far side of the park. However, the surface has not been laid to tarmac and during the initial visit it was particularly wet and uneven.

Previous experience during summer months suggests that parking can be a significant issue and perhaps more should be made of the availability of parking at both the station and in the vicinity of Riverside Park, with consideration given to laying tarmac in the car park at the far side of the Park. In addition, whilst the motorcyclists comprise an important element of the visitor economy, they do cause issues in relation to parking. The final visit to Burnham was conducted on a sunny, Sunday morning and there were significant numbers of bikers present. Their bikes were parked around the war memorial (which given it is an appealing feature is a shame) and snaked along the side of the High Street, causing issues for both other road users and pedestrians. Whilst there is no easy solution to this problem, thought does need to be given to whether specific parking can be made available.

One further element of note; there are disabled parking spaces alongside the toilets in Riverside Park, which is an excellent example of best practice.
Open Spaces & Floral Displays - Burnham on Crouch - Score 80%

Aside from the promenade area, the main open space is Riverside Park. The park is generally excellent and features three play areas, a basket ball court, a football pitch, rugby pitches, a ‘teen’ shelter, skate park and lavatories.

The Park has a number of paths which are largely around the edge. These are comprised of a reasonably hard wearing surface (although they may not be entirely suitable during wet weather) and adequately positioned. In general the park was well maintained and clearly visible CCTV ensured a feeling of safety and security for visitors.

Whilst visits were made during winter months, it is clear that effort is made with regards to floral displays. The display at the foot of the arrival signage is an excellent example of the use of floral displays and provides an additional welcoming touch for visitors. During all visits the displays were free from weeds and on the latter two visits contained flowers.

Furniture & Street Lighting - Burnham on Crouch - Score 70%

In general, the furniture in Burnham on Crouch is of a reasonably high quality. Most is ornate in style and in keeping with its surroundings, with seating often being of particularly high quality (although somewhat mixed in style depending on location).

However, it is worth giving consideration to the replacement of litter bins as many have rusted through and not only detracts from the quality of the street scene, but could also
pose a danger. It should also be noted that one of the benches in the High Street is broken, with a missing top bar.

In addition, as illustrated by the photo on the following page, whilst it is still relatively smart, street lighting in the High Street is perhaps rather too modern in style (especially the lighting unit itself). Consideration could be given to replacing this with lighting similar in style to that found on the quayside (as shown by the right hand picture).

**General Security - Burnham on Crouch - Score 20%**

Whilst there is a reasonable feeling of security, there are few visible security features apparent within the town. Riverside Park benefits from excellent CCTV, but this doesn’t appear to be reflected in other areas of the town where none is apparent.

One element worth mentioning is that Burnham is a known haunt of bikers. Whilst there is no suggestion that their presence leads to trouble (and the town has a very low crime rate), the town can feel a little intimidating during the peak season.

**Bus Stops - Burnham on Crouch - Score 50%**

Bus timetables appeared to be up to date. However, they didn’t include details of fares and whilst one in the High Street had included contact details, these had been partially covered by a new timetable. There are no bus shelters as such.

**General Cleanliness - Burnham on Crouch - Score 80%**

During all three visits the town was clean throughout and litter bins were generally empty. There is very little evidence of vandalism or graffiti and
There is no overtly visible gum on the pavements. There is also a gum disposal unit in the High Street, but whilst this is an excellent idea, it has been vandalised and is not currently in use.

2. **THE MARKET**

Total Section Score:
Burnham on Crouch 82%

**Location - Burnham on Crouch - Score 67%**
Burnham benefits from a farmers' market on the third Sunday of every month. It is located in the Carnival Hall. This is certainly a reasonable location during the winter months, as it is inside and protects shoppers and stallholders from any inclement weather. It also provides adequate parking.

Carnival Hall is reasonably easy to find and there were a number of signs around the town (although one of these was rather confusing, stating, “Farmers Market, Carnival Hall, This Sunday” with no details with regards to where Carnival Hall is).

However, thought could be given to moving it outside during the summer months, perhaps to somewhere around Riverside Park. It seems a great shame to hide the market away when it has significant potential as both a draw for visitors and something for them to do/see when they arrive.

**Range - Burnham on Crouch - Score 82%**
Although the market was small and specialist in nature, the range was reasonably good. It included stalls selling garden ornaments, plants, fish, meat, cheese, pies, honey, apple juice, soap and cakes, as well as a farmer promoting a natural burial ground.
Presentation - Burnham on Crouch - Score 97%
Given that this is both an indoor market and a specialist market, presentation differs somewhat from the norm. However, all stalls were very professionally laid out and the presentation was of a high standard. Accessibility was reasonable, with plenty of space between stalls.

3.  RETAIL PROVISION

Total Section Score: 58%

Range - Burnham on Crouch - Score 67%
The range of shops in Burnham is reasonable for its size and rather spread out. It is an interesting mix and includes a Tesco Express, Co-op, a bakery, a farm shop, a butchers, a convenience store, a hardware store, an auto spares shop, two banks a chandlery, a number of hairdressers/beauticians, a DIY store, a number of antiques shops, some galleries and a newsagents amongst others. It seems that the range and quality of shops may have reduced significantly over the years and given the popularity of the town over the summer months, it is perhaps surprising that this has not improved in recent years (although the antiques shops and galleries are a sign of a relatively buoyant visitor economy).

Shopping Environment - Burnham on Crouch - Score 50%
The shop fronts are generally well maintained and whilst there are no visible security features, the shopping environment feels safe enough. However, whilst not strictly a retail outlet, the cinema is in desperate need of renovation and represents a significant eye sore.
as visitors approach the centre of Burnham. Consideration should be given to working with
the owner to investigate grants or other sources of funding that may be available to aid
renovation.

4. CATERING FACILITIES

Total Section Score: 80%

Range - Burnham on Crouch - Score 80%
The town has a wealth of pubs, restaurants and catering facilities (perhaps almost
outnumbering the retail outlets). The range of cuisine on offer includes traditional English,
fish, Chinese, Indian, Thai and Turkish.

These include the Cabin Dairy Tea Rooms, Temperance Bar Cafe, New Welcome Sailor,
Queen's Head, Victoria Inn, Star Inn, The White Hart, Railway Hotel, The Galley, Dhan
Shiri, Sgt Pepper’s, Ruam Thai, The Polash, The Quayside, Swallowtail, The Contented Sole,
Burnham Grill, Chillies, Curry Cottage and Oriental House.

External Physical Condition - Burnham on Crouch - Score 80%
Restaurant frontages are generally reasonably well maintained, although there are one or
two minor exceptions. A boards are well placed and do not interfere with pedestrians.

5. TOILETS AND BABY CHANGE FACILITIES

Total Section Score:
Burnham on Crouch 84%

Location - Burnham on Crouch - Score 70%
There are three sets of public lavatories and all are conveniently located. The first set is
located between the high street and the quayside. It is well signposted and very easy to
find, being situated on possible the main pedestrian thoroughfare between the High Street
and the river front.
The second and third sets can be found at Riverside Park. These are perhaps not so apparent unless visitors are specifically travelling to Riverside Park or the leisure centre (there is pedestrian signage but no road signage). The first lavatory is an automated lavatory located next to the first play areas, whilst the second set includes male, female and disabled toilets as well as dedicated baby changing and is located prior to the skate park. It is pleasing to note that contact details for the council can be found on the lavatories adjacent to the skate park. It is also worth pointing out that there are specific disabled parking spaces next to the lavatories and this should be commended.

**Layout & Design - Burnham on Crouch - Score 87%**

The lavatories near the quayside are reasonably well laid out and there is more than enough space to facilitate easy access to all areas. Lighting is quite well positioned and during the day there is significant natural light. The lavatories are reasonably well ventilated.

The automated toilet is rather small, but adequate enough as an additional lavatory to the two main blocks.

The layout of the toilet block adjacent to the skate park is somewhat cramped (particularly with regards to the entrance), but shouldn’t cause any issues for able bodied users. Lighting is reasonable, as is ventilation.

**Fixtures & Fittings - Burnham on Crouch - Score 82%**

Many of the fittings in the lavatories on the quayside are rather old and consideration could be given to a refit (left hand picture, following page). This is especially important given the extent to which Burnham benefits from tourism during the summer months. They are generally of porcelain and although old, all are in working order and most are reasonably maintained (although one of the cisterns for the urinals was coming away from the wall).

The fixtures and fittings in the lavatories adjacent to the skate park are all rather modern and all match (right hand picture). They are of reasonably good quality and interestingly, there are hand basins in each cubicle as well as next to the urinals. However, the lavatories had no actual seats and where this is the
case, disposable covers should always be provided. In addition, there is a lack of flat surfaces on which to place personal possessions etc. It doesn’t appear that sensor equipment is used to control the flush of the urinals.

The fittings within the automated toilet are not ideal, but clearly these come as standards and there is no provision for change.

**Baby Changing - Burnham on Crouch - Score 100%**
The main toilet block on the quayside doesn’t benefit from baby changing, but there are excellent facilities within the block adjacent to the skate park (some of the best seen by the assessor). This includes a very good changing table with good straps (below left and centre), a seat with straps for an additional child (below right), a lavatory for the parent, wash basin and very good disposal facilities. Whilst there is no provision of disposable nappy sacks or table covers (or a nappy vending machine), it is hard to argue that the facilities are anything other than first class and Maldon District Council should be congratulated for the efforts it has gone to.

![Image of a changing table folded away and opened out, along with a seat featuring straps for an additional child.](image)

**Maintenance & Cleanliness- Burnham on Crouch - Score 80%**
All facilities were clean and included sufficient provision of toilet paper and soap during all three visits. As previously mentioned, the toilet block at the quayside was perhaps showing signs of age and on the final visit the gents’ toilets were out of order.

6. INFORMATION PROVISION

Total Section Score:
Burnham on Crouch 70%
The Tourist Information Centre is located in the centre of the town. Whilst there is pedestrian signage throughout the town directing visitors to the TIC, there is no immediate signage and it isn’t immediately apparent where the TIC is.

One issue is the lack of parking. There is very little provision for parking in the immediate vicinity and given the town’s parking problems during peak season, this could be an issue. There is also a step into the TIC and whilst it is possible that a ramp is available for disabled visitors, there are no signs to indicate that this is the case.

Opening times are reasonably good, with the TIC open from 10am until 4pm from Monday to Saturday throughout the year. This is especially good during winter, but consideration could be given to reducing winter hours and opening on a Sunday in summer. It is suggested that research is conducted to analyse winter footfall to the TIC in the context of visitor numbers to the town on a summer Sunday. There is no doubt that Burnham lends itself to weekend day trips in summer months and it would be somewhat surprising if visitor numbers on the average Sunday in summer didn’t prove to be the highest of all days throughout the week/year.

It is also worth pointing out that whilst opening hours are displayed in the door window, they are in very small text and consideration could be given to using a sign like the one displayed in the window at Maldon TIC.

Whilst not as comprehensive as some TIC’s (possibly because it is a shared space), the range of information was reasonable and certainly included sufficient local information.

During the face-to-face visit the member of staff was asked whether they could recommend somewhere to stay within the surrounding area. Their initial welcome was polite and friendly and service was prompt. They provided the district accommodation guide, but indicated that it was about to go out of date, with a new version imminent. In addition, they also provided the town guide, indicating that there was some information about accommodation establishments included but unlike the district guide, these were not necessarily quality assured.
Given that the TIC wasn’t busy at the time, it is suggested that they could have made greater efforts to further understand the nature of the enquiry. What type of accommodation was the visitor looking for? What grade of accommodation did they require? Where in particular would they like to stay? Were there any special requirements?

However, the level of service was professional and the member of staff was reasonably smart, wearing what appeared to be a standard uniform with TIC neckerchief. Whilst the response was brief, it was concluded in a polite and friendly manner.

In addition, an email was sent to Burnham TIC asking for information about Riverside walks in the town. No response was received (junk mail folders were checked). There is always a chance that the email went astray on its way to the TIC, but clearly it is important that all emails received are responded to in a timely manner, even in instances where the TIC is unable to help.

*Please note: the above score is based on service during the face to face visit only.

**Information Boards - Burnham on Crouch - Score 78%**

There are a number of information boards within the town. In the High Street there is a board which has been put up by the town council. During one of the visits this was being used to display old photos and documents relating to the town and provided some interesting background to the town.

Other boards can be found at Riverside Park. One show the ‘Trim Trail’, an initiative between Maldon District Council, Essex County Council and Sport Essex aimed at giving people an outdoor exercise trail to follow which includes various apparatus. The second board provides and map of Riverside Park as well as general information. It also details the other parks that can be found in the district.

All of the information boards are in keeping with their surroundings, in good condition and were clean during each visit. Consideration could be given to introducing the style of information board that can be found in Maldon (discussed later in this report), particularly in the central area of the town or on the quayside.
Other Information Sources - Burnham on Crouch - Score 80%

A range of other information sources are available which include details of what Burnham has to offer.

The Town Guide is well presented, with a colourful sailing scene on the front. The guide includes some interesting background information and history on the town, as well as highlighting major events and providing a directory of local services. It includes reasonably extensive information about the leisure pursuits that can be undertaken in the town and also has an excellent map, which includes the main points of note within the town.

The District Council recently updated the district guide, and whilst the last iteration was of a decent standard, the new one exceeds it in many respects. Design is of an exceptionally high standard, making use of bright colours, simple modern fonts and high quality landscape photography to create an aesthetically pleasing document.

The front cover uses an almost iconic photograph of St Peter’s Chapel in the sunset, which whilst striking and highly recognisable to those with knowledge of the district, is perhaps slightly too moody and doesn’t give an adequate insight into what the district has to offer. However, this is a minor criticism and it would be churlish to suggest it significantly detracts from the quality of the brochure.

As per the previous iteration of the document, the guide includes an introduction to the district which whilst simple, provides a good overview of the district’s tourism product. Following the contents page is a double page spread covering the two key towns. This includes a brief overview of each as well as a number of pictures. The brochure then makes mention of the three main areas of the district and the villages that can be found within them, before providing a map of the area and directions for arrival. The map provides good coverage of the district but could perhaps be extended to show the main routes into the area (as per the directions).

The brochure is then split into a number of sections, including Step Back, By the Water, Indulge, The Great Outdoors and Special Treats. Step Back provides information on the key historical attractions in the districts as well as an overview of Byrhnooth, the Saxon Warrior. By the water outlines the water-base activities on offer, whilst Indulge relates to shopping (the latter feels slightly forced, perhaps because the district has a relatively small retail offering). The Great Outdoors gives an overview of the wildlife and walking activities within the district. It cross-references the booklets and maps available from the TIC, something which should be commended. Special Treats highlights the choice of food and drink on offer.
in the district and uses photography of some of the area’s products to provide a tantalising
overview of what is available. Aside from the Indulge section, these elements neatly and
accurately segment the tourism products in the district.

The brochure goes on to outline 12 facts about the district. These are generally interesting
and worthy of a place in the document. The following section provides a useful calendar of
events (it is assumed that the brochure will be used for more than one year, hence the lack
of dates). Reference is made to further information on the website.

The final elements of the brochure cover accommodation, how to make a booking and
where to obtain further information. It provides a useful overview with regards to the
quality assurance standards. Details of accommodation establishments are well laid out and
easy to understand, and have helpfully been broken down by area and type. Following the
accommodation section is a list of attractions, with telephone numbers (whilst space is
limited, thought could be given to including URLs in future).

The back page includes a photographic competition which is a nice addition, as well as
potentially providing Maldon District Council with a way of obtaining pictures for use on the
website and in future publications.

In common with the guide, the website has recently been updated. This was certainly long
overdue and the new stand-alone site is a welcome and necessary addition to the district’s
tourism marketing collateral. It is pleasing to note that much of the information on the site
is common to the brochure.

However, one key consideration for the future is creating a more coherent sense of brand.
The brochure and the website use different brands (Discover the Maldon District and Visit
the Maldon District), with differing design styles and fonts. This really is something that
should be addressed in order to reduce consumer confusion and create a single, strong
brand for the area.

This issue aside, the website is generally very good and provides an excellent tool to help
potential visitors plan and book their trip. The site includes video clips of the area which is
a great way to give people a taste of what is on offer before they visit. Aside from an
overview of the district, the home page also features details of the photographic
competition and Moot Hall tours. The main sections of the site are set out on the left-hand
side and are highly visible as soon as visitors land on the home page. On the sub pages there
are easy to see sections providing directions to the district and key contact information.
The accommodation section is easy to use, featuring a browse facility along with a fairly comprehensive search. However, it should be noted that on the results/overview page each establishment features a button which says “Details &”. It is assumed this should be “Details & Availability”. Clearly this needs attention.

Whilst the accommodation section doesn’t include online booking facilities, it does provide availability. As consumers become ever more sophisticated in their use of the internet, many are demanding online booking and in instances where it isn’t available they will simply look elsewhere. However, the provision of availability at least goes someway to reducing this possibility.

Navigation of the Things to Do section is intuitive and easy to use and broken down into fairly obvious sections. However, these sections may work better if they directly reflected those included in the brochure. With regards to the details of activities and attractions, the results pages would benefit from the inclusion of more photography as they are rather bland at this moment in time.

The Visitor Information section provides useful contact details as well as a link to tide times and a weather forecast.

The map search is a fantastic feature and allows potential visitors to augment their searches with some geographical context. The only element that could be improved is to include the title and introductory paragraph above the map, as those with smaller screens will not be able to see these at first glance.

One addition to the site, which would no doubt be welcomed by all, would be the inclusion of a photo gallery. There are some stunning landscapes in the district and it would be worth highlighting these on the website.

All in all, the website is simple to use and aesthetically pleasing.
4 CATEGORY B SECTION 1 CORE CRITERIA & BEST PRACTICE

*Core criteria are highlighted in red, best practice in blue

I GENERAL

First impressions are all important. Visitors will often base their opinion of a town on their arrival experience. Not only is it essential that visitors can find their way to the town centre or local attractions, they should also be able to park quickly and easily and not be alienated by the cost of parking. A clean and tidy appearance will go a long way to creating a positive visitor experience. It is also essential that visitors are provided with information to enable them to find their way around the town. They should be able to expect a safe and welcoming atmosphere. Street furniture such as benches and litter bins should be provided and must be well maintained in order to ensure a positive impression.

This section includes:
- Signage
- Parking
- Information Boards
- Open Spaces & Floral Displays
- Street Furniture
- General Security
- Cleanliness

Signage

It is important that visitors can find their way both to, and around a town. Road and pedestrian signs can help ease the visitor’s arrival.

There should be:
- Signs indicating arrival on approach roads to the town;
- Clear road signs to the town centre and brown signs to main attractions (if applicable);
- Pedestrian signs pointing the way to major attractions, shopping streets, car parks and leisure facilities.

Signs could be:
- Clearly legible;
- At a suitable height - it is important that signs are not obstructed and that they are visible to approaching motorists;
- Of uniform design - this could include similarity of font, colour and basic style. Added quality can be achieved by incorporating the local coat of arms or council logo;
Parking
Ease of parking, car park design and the cost of parking are all important. Visitors should be able to find spaces close to the town centre relatively easily. The design should facilitate easy and safe movement of traffic and pedestrians within the car park. Provision should be made for various types of visitor and vehicle. Cost at conveniently located short stay car parks will be relatively price insensitive, assuming the car parks do not compete with free parking. However, charges should reflect the location, security and quality of the car park. Car parks or street parking should also be located close to an area attractive to visitors, i.e. the high street.

There should be:
- Provision for parking either through car parks or street parking.

Car parks and areas of street parking should:
- Be easy to locate and enter from the local street network;
- Be secure with visible deterrents against vandalism and theft such as CCTV cameras or warning signs;
- Be well lit. Lights must be thoughtfully placed to provide security and safety for pedestrians;
- Be clean and tidy with well maintained hard surfaces.

There should be:
- Spaces for disabled motorists;
- Parent and child spaces;
- Clear indications of one way or directional systems.

There could also be:
- Spaces for motorbikes and bicycles.

Pedestrian safety will be improved if there are:
- Direct and signed pedestrian routes from the car parks to the town centre, segregated from traffic routes;

Spaces may be used most freely by the visitor if they:
- Conform to the minimum standard length of 4.8 metres, with a width of 2.4 metres for normal spaces and 3.6 metres for disabled and parent spaces. Disabled and parent spaces should be clearly signposted and marked with yellow lines and wheelchair symbols, and close to pedestrian walkways. Motorbike spaces should also be marked and signposted;
- Are clearly delineated.

Charges should:
- Be clearly indicated along with time limits and complaints procedures (if there are not any charges this should also be clearly indicated);

Charges could:
• Be scaled to reflect the proximity of the car park to the town centre or main attractions;
• Levied on exit.

Where applicable, pay and display machines should:
• Give change;
• Be free from obstruction, dirt or graffiti.

Visitors may expect staff at payment booths to be:
• Appropriately dressed, polite and efficient.

Open Spaces & Floral Display
Open spaces such as gardens and parks, along with floral displays can be important to the quality of the visitor experience. Whilst not essential, they help to make towns more aesthetically pleasant.

Where present open spaces should have:
• Litter bins, furniture such as benches, lighting and hard surface pathways.

A visitor will expect open spaces to be:
• Well maintained, with tidy borders;
• Free from rubbish;
• Safe, with a feeling of security. Ideally there should be security features such as CCTV.

They could also include:
• A children’s play area with well maintained equipment such as slides, swings and climbing frames (a suitable surface such as runner should be present around the base of all such apparatus).

Visitors will be most appreciative of floral displays that are:
• Well maintained, free from weeds and litter;
• Clearly visible along main routes or in central locations.

Street Furniture
Street furniture such as benches, litter bins and fences all help to improve the visual aspect of a town.

Furniture should:
• Include litter bins, benches and street lights.

Its presence will be enhanced if it:
• Is hard standing (grass may become worn leading to the formation of puddles in winter) and free from obstruction;
• Is free from dirt and vandalism;
• Is well maintained.

Litter bins should:
• Be regularly emptied and generally clean
Bus stops
Bus stops are likely to be frequently used by visitors.

Bus stops should have:
- Up to date timetables.

They could also include:
- Details of fares and contact numbers for relevant bus companies;
- Some form of shelter. Any shelter should be safe, well maintained and free from dirt and vandalism.

General Security
Towns should:
- Benefit from the provision of closed circuit television to deter crime and vandalism.

To increase the sense of security there could also be:
- A regular police presence:
- Warning signs.

Cleanliness
Cleanliness refers to the general appearance of the town in terms of tidiness and lack of litter.

The town should be:
- Tidy in appearance with no visible litter;
- Free from dirt and vandalism.

II THE MARKET

Street markets add to the range of retail facilities available, they also provide colour and culture and are often closely associated with local tradition. This section is relevant to a range of markets including, general produce markets, flea markets, antique markets or farmers markets.

This section includes:
- Location
- Range
- Presentation

Location
Markets may attract a greater number of visitors if they are located in an area which benefits from good pedestrian access, proximity to retail outlets and close parking facilities.
To attract visitors the market could be:

- Centrally positioned in an area easily accessible to pedestrians;
- Adjacent to or in the proximity of other retail facilities;
- Within a short distance of car parks.

**Range**
The range of stalls should be varied and present visitors with an alternative to retail outlets.
The range should:

- Complement and enhance current retail provision.

**Presentation**
Street markets can often appear untidy, particularly towards the end of the day. It is important that the general level of presentation of stalls and goods is high.

The market should:

- Contain sufficient provision for refuse disposal.

Ideally it should:

- Allow freedom of movement for wheelchairs and pushchairs;
- Be tidy and have well maintained stalls with thoughtful presentation of goods.

### III RETAIL PROVISION

Most visitors to a town will come into contact with retail facilities. The range of shops and physical condition of the shopping environment will all be important. The existence of specialist shops is also important and can greatly add to the visitor experience, even providing a reason to visit a particular town - for example, certain towns such as Coggeshall in Essex, benefit from the agglomeration of antiques shops.

This section includes

- Range
- Shopping Environment

The range of shops on offer is very important. A visitor will be impressed if the range of outlets is varied and offers choice.

There should be:

- A mix of chain and independent stores.

This should include:

- A chemist, banks, a Post Office, hairdressers, newsagents, butchers and supermarkets.
And could include a:

- Clothes shops, electrical shops, bakers, shoe shops, book shops, entertainment shops, a fishmonger, a cinema and a department store.

**Shopping Environment**

It is important that the shopping environment is pleasant and safe.

**Within the shopping area there should be:**

- The presence of suitable and well maintained security features (creating a general feeling of security).

**Ideally the area should also feature:**

- Clean streets and pavements;
- Well maintained and well presented shop fronts.

**IV CATERING FACILITIES**

As with retail facilities, visitors are also likely to use catering facilities such as restaurants, cafes or takeaways. Again, the range and physical condition of catering facilities will be all important.

**This section includes**

- **Range**
- **External Physical Condition**

**Visitors should be able to expect:**

- An appropriate provision of catering establishments relevant to the location and surroundings.

**External Physical Condition**

Visitors are unlikely to enter a catering establishment unless its external features are well maintained.

**External fittings and fascias should be:**

- Well maintained, clean and free from vandalism.

**‘A’ boards should be:**

- Well maintained, clean and free from graffiti. They should not obstruct passers-by (especially those with impaired mobility) or traffic.
V TOILETS & BABY CHANGING FACILITIES

Toilets should be easy to find, clean and in working order.

This section includes
- Presence
- Location
- Layout and Design
- Fixtures and Fittings
- Baby Change Facilities
- Maintenance and Cleanliness

Presence
All towns should have:
- Toilets open to the public;
- Toilets accessible to disabled people

Toilets and baby changing facilities should be:
- Signposted.

Visitors may expect toilets and baby changing facilities to be:
- Easy to find, close to the central shopping area.

Layout and Design
Consideration should be given to the ease with which the visitor can use the facilities.

The layout of the toilets could be designed to provide:
- Easy access to all areas, such as cubicles, washbasins and hand dryers - these fixtures should also be easy to use;
- Lighting appropriately positioned (such as above mirrors and over cubicles) to allow easy use of all areas;

Disabled toilets could be designed to include:
- Furniture that facilitates ease of use - this could include the provision of hand rails and large cubicles.

Fixtures and Fittings
A higher standard of quality may be achieved where a greater range of fixtures are provided and the quantity of fixtures is sufficient for visitor numbers.

Fixtures and fittings should include:
- Hand drying facilities, sanitary towel disposal facilities, toilet rolls and soap;

They could also include:
- Mirrors, waste bins, flat surfaces, toilet roll holders and hooks in cubicles.

Appearance can be enhanced if the fixtures and fittings are:
• Of high quality and matching;
And toilets incorporate the use of:
• Sensor taps, sensor flush urinals, dual flush WCs and low energy light bulbs.

Increasing emphasis is being placed on baby changing facilities, with parents looking to take babies on shopping and leisure trips. All category F towns should provide baby changing facilities alongside or within their toilets.

Where present, baby change facilities should:
• Be available and accessible to both sexes, either within male and female toilets or as a separate area;
• Include hygienic and secure changing surfaces with safety straps and disposable covers;
• Provide suitable waste bins (i.e. with secure, sprung lids).

They could:
• provide nappy sacks and nappy vending machines;
• Include a WC for parent use and a baby seat;
• Contain a separate room for baby feeding.

**Maintenance and Cleanliness**

Visitors may expect all public toilets to be well maintained and clean.

Toilets and baby change facilities should have:
• Clean facilities (areas above and below eye level should be clean) with evidence of regular hygiene checks (for example a sign detailing cleaning rotas and the time of the last check).

It is reasonable for the visitor to expect:
• Well maintained fixtures and fittings;
• Well ventilated, fresh smelling facilities.

The toilets may be enhanced by:
• The provision of automatic aerosol dispensers.

**VI INFORMATION PROVISION**

The provision of good quality information not only helps to attract people to a town, it also enhances the quality of their visit.

Ideally category E towns should have a TIC. This will often be central to a visit. It is important that TIC staff are well briefed, polite and able to use their initiative to deal with any request for information about the locality.

Information boards can be used to provide a useful reference point for visitors on arrival. Thought must be given to the positioning of boards to ensure they are easy to find.
It is important that information provided at the TIC, on information boards or on web-sites is professionally produced, relevant to the visitor and comprehensive.

This section includes:

Tourist Information Centre - comprising:
- Presence, Location, Decor, Layout & Ease of Access
- Opening Times
- Information Range
- Service

Information Boards

Other Information Sources

**TIC - Presence, Location, Decor, Layout & Ease of Access**

It is important that the TIC is in a central location that is easy for visitors to find. Thought should be given to the layout to ensure all areas are accessible to disabled people and visitor flow is efficient. Visitors will expect the TIC to be clean and well maintained.

Where applicable, the TIC should:
- Be well sign posted - this could include pedestrian signs from the main car parks as well as road signs from the edge of town;
- Provide access for the disabled with ramps and railings.

It is important that:

The layout aids efficient visitor flow and facilitates freedom of movement for the disabled. Leaflet or product racks should not be located in positions that will hinder movement such as by the door or till.

Throughput may be increased if the TIC is:
- Centrally located, close to retail outlets and parking facilities;
- Easy to find within the local street plan;

Quality can be enhanced if:
- The TIC is clean and well maintained both inside and out.

**TIC - Opening Times**

A TIC is of more benefit to visitors if it is open at convenient times.

The TIC should be open:
- Throughout the week with opening hours reflecting visitor flow and volume.

The TIC could:
- Open for significant periods at weekends;
- Open for longer periods during the summer.

**TIC - Information Range**

The quality, clarity and range of information provided is important
The TIC should provide:

- A wide range of leaflets or brochures covering the main attractions, accommodation establishments, transport systems and surrounding towns and villages.

The range can be enhanced by:

Providing free maps - these will be appreciated by the visitor, increasing the likelihood that they will see more of the town.

**TIC - Service**

First impressions count and the importance of well trained staff cannot be understated. The attitude and efficiency of staff when dealing with customers, especially in how they acknowledge and serve visitors, and how well queries are dealt with, will impact greatly upon the quality of the visitor experience. Staff may not need to be in complete uniforms but should be easily identifiable and this could be achieved with the use of suitable clothing or name badges. It is important that staff have sufficient knowledge to provide the information requested by the visitor or advise them of an alternative source.

The visitor should be able to expect:

- A polite greeting rather than a curt ‘yes’, followed by an efficient level of service.

Staff should:

- Be knowledgeable, able to give directions and provide information that may not otherwise be available in leaflets.
- Be able to provide advice on where to go and which sources of information are most useful.

**Information Boards**

Information boards not only provide a useful reference point on arrival, they can also supply information when the TIC is closed. In smaller towns they may even be used instead of a TIC.

Boards should be:

- Present and located where clearly visible to arriving visitors;

To ensure ease of use they could:

- Be hard standing on a surface such as Tarmac or concrete (a grass area will soon become worn and retain water);
- Be positioned at an appropriate height and at an angle that doesn’t retain rain water or snow, or glare in bright sunlight - the material used for the board will also be important in terms of its retention of water and the extent to which it reflects sunlight;
- Be well lit, either by general street lighting or dedicated lights;
- Be legible with large print for those with impaired vision;
- Be clean and free from vandalism.

**Other Sources of Information**
Visitors may need to obtain information about a town before they visit. By providing print and electronic media that is available prior to a visit, the quality of the visitor experience may be enhanced.

**Brochures should be:**
- Professionally produced on good quality paper;
- Of a manageable size and clearly presented allowing information to be easily read.

**Web-sites should:**
- Be well designed to allow easy navigation;
- Be up to date with no outdated or incorrect information;
- Provide details of other relevant contact methods such as addresses and telephone numbers.

**Brochures could include:**
- Details of the main attractions in the locality;
- Maps of the area with driving directions to the town from all major roads.

**Ideally, the front cover should:**
- Feature a logo and title, both of which are visible when racked.

**Web-sites could include:**
- Downloadable maps;
- Photographs of the locality (any photos should include captions);
- Links to other relevant web-sites including attractions, transport providers, accommodation providers, restaurants and local authorities.

**Visitors will find maps most useful if they:**
- Are to scale (clear indications of the scale provided);
- Show road, rail and pedestrian routes (such as town trails);
- Show the location of car parks and information sources such as the TIC or information boards.
SECTION 2 AUDIT RESULTS

Total Score:
Maldon  76.5%

Extent to Which Core Criteria Met:
Maldon  85.2%

I GENERAL

Total Section Score:
Maldon  73%

Signage - Maldon - Score 77%

The arrival sign visible when approaching from Witham/Heybridge is of a reasonable quality, if perhaps slightly dirty during the time of the first visit. However, it is poorly positioned, particularly for those arriving from Tiptree/Heybridge and if it is ever replaced consideration should be given to moving it slightly further towards the town centre.

There is a good provision of arrival signage in the direction from Mundon, with signs on both sides of the road. However, one has been daubed with bright yellow graffiti and needs cleaning before the main tourist season. The sign on approach from Danbury is small but clean and perfectly adequate.

It is worth making mention of the main town sign that can be seen when approaching from the A414 along Spital Road, just prior to the High Street (far right picture below). This is ornate, carved sign featuring the town crest and is particularly attractive. It incorporates a flower bed below to give it an additional attractive element.

The town centre is very well signposted from the outskirts of town in all directions, with signposts at every roundabout. Indeed, some roundabouts have more than one sign and consideration could be given to reducing the number in order to eliminate clutter.

Pedestrian signage is generally ornate in style and in keeping with the surroundings. However, some simply utilises standard road signage and whilst this is more than adequate, it would be worth considering ensuring there is uniformity all round.
On the approach to Maldon from all directions there is excellent signage to the town centre. Pedestrian signage is generally of high quality (second right), whilst the town sign on Spital Road immediately prior to the High Street is particularly well presented (right).

**Parking - Maldon - Score 80%**

The High Street East Car Park has good delineation and a sound surface. It is well signposted from the edge of town and there is reasonable signposting immediately adjacent to the entrance (although this had been twisted on the initial visit and was not pointing in quite the right direction).

The car park benefits from three disabled spaces which are generally well positioned, close to the entrance. However, one is against a wall which could provide problems for some disabled drivers (certainly making it difficult for those with passengers). There are also two parents spaces which are again well positioned and of suitable width.

Lighting around the car park is of good quality, but limited in its extent and with a lack of CCTV or other security features, the car park could be subject to crime. However, the car park is overlooked by flats which may help prevent possible thefts or vandalism.

Charges are very reasonable, although it wasn’t particularly clear prior to payment whether the pay and display machine gives change (which it doesn’t). They are however very clearly marked on the sign adjacent to the machine.
The signpost for Butt Street Car Park was only visible when approaching from the East. As one of the main car parks in the town, it is important that this is addressed in time for the summer period.

This is very much a car park of two halves. The first has poor delineation (middle picture below) and lighting, whilst the second has a significantly newer (and therefore better) surface, very good delineation, greater provision of lighting and the addition of CCTV (below right), providing a far greater sense of security. Charges are the same as those at High Street East Car Park.

The car park has approximately five disabled spaces, the majority of which are conveniently located near the pedestrian exit to the High Street (although two are positioned to the edge of the car park) and are generally of the required width. However, some are very poorly marked and attention could be made to ensuring they are clearly visible to disabled drivers. In addition to the disabled spaces there are two parent spaces. These are well positioned and of a suitable width.

White Horse Car Park benefits from approximately 10 disabled spaces (an excellent provision). These are generally very well positioned and clearly marked. Three are located at one end of the car park and it was not immediately apparent if there is a reason for this (i.e. proximity to certain public facilities). There are also four parent spaces, which are once again clearly marked and well positioned.
The surface and delineation are excellent, but the layout of the car park is confusing and the directional signs are insufficient to ensure confusion is avoided. Consideration could be given either to revising the layout (although this is restricted by the presence of walls in the centre of the car park) or a significant improvement to directional signage.

Again, charges are very reasonable, but one of the two payment machines wasn’t functioning at the time of the first visit.

The lighting is poor, but there is some CCTV on a nearby building. Whilst it is not apparent whether or not this actually covers the car park, it no doubt acts as a deterrent to would-be thieves.

Open Spaces & Floral Displays - Maldon - Score 79%

The main open space in Maldon is Promenade Park. This is an excellent public park with a wide range of facilities and the despite the three visits being made during winter, the park was particularly well utilised on each occasion.

The range of facilities is extensive and includes a lake, a ‘splash park’, a play galleon, a zip wire, a boating lake, a skate park, cafes, toilet blocks and sports pitches. During each visit the park was clean and the facilities were all well maintained. There is a reasonable provision of litter bins and dog bins, and these were generally empty during the three visits.

There is extensive car parking and whilst entrance to the park is free, it is clear that parking charges go some way to helping pay for the park’s upkeep. Compared to parking elsewhere in the town the charges are relatively expensive at £2. The surface of the car park is primarily grass and hardcore, but it is reasonably well suited to purposed nonetheless. It should be noted that it isn’t particularly clear whether visitors have to pay to park in the overflow spaces on the grass. On the final visit the park was very well attended and many people had to park on the grass area, with some confusion with regards to whether charges extended to this area or not.

The park benefits from excellent CCTV coverage throughout, giving a real sense of security, something that is no doubt important for parents.

Given the time of year, there were few floral displays that actually had flowers in them. However, they were still free from weeds and relatively tidy.
Furniture & Street Lighting - Maldon - Score 80%
Street furniture is generally of a good quality and in the vicinity of the town hall there is certainly plenty of it, with an excellent provision of seating.

Litter bins are generally ornate in style, but many are rather old and consideration needs to be given to repair or replacement in cases where they are particularly rusty.

Sufficient lighting is provided in the main pedestrian areas within the town. However, whilst the poles are of a high quality, the lights themselves are not entirely in keeping with their surroundings and consideration could be given to replacing them with more ornate lights should the opportunity arise.

General Security - Maldon - Score 50%
The town feels secure and whilst there are very few visible crime deterrents (either in the form of CCTV or signs), it does appear generally safe and crime free. There is some CCTV, but this tends to be in the car parks or attached to private buildings. Consideration could be given to adding CCTV along the High Street to further enhance the feeling of security.

Bus Stops - Maldon - Score 67%
In general the bus stops were well maintained, with high quality shelters providing some seating (in the form of a ‘perch’ style seat). Whilst one of the bus stops inspected in the town centre during the first visit didn’t have timetables (it still had no timetables at the time of the second visit), the remainder had timetables (although one was rather dirty), one of which included contact details for an information line (this appears to be increasingly rare and should be commended). All three bus shelters were very clean and
free from graffiti or vandalism. It is worth pointing out that there are numerous bus shelters on the relief road around the edge of town that don’t have any timetables. Whilst these are probably not used by visitors, it would nonetheless be sensible to include timetables where possible.

One of the bus stops had no timetables (left), one had a timetable which was rather dirty (centre), whilst another had timetables that included contact details for a travel information line (right).

**General Cleanliness - Maldon - Score 70%**

Whilst the streets were generally clean and tidy during all visits, there is a noticeable amount of gum on the pavements, particularly in the area around the war memorial. Whilst the town benefits from gum disposal units it is not clear whether these are actually well used. Consideration should be given to hiring a specialist contractor to remove the gum on pavements, particularly around the war memorial which is otherwise one of the town centres more attractive areas.

II THE MARKET

Total Section Score:
Maldon 65%

**Location - Maldon - Score 87%**
The general market is located in Butt Lane Car Park and is easily accessible to visitors, either from the car park itself or from the High Street through Wenlock Way.

**Range - Maldon - Score 64%**
The range of stalls is rather limited and only includes fruit and vegetables, jewellery, kids’ clothing, flowers, furniture and books. This is a rather odd mix and somewhat disappointing
for a town of Maldon’s size. It also doesn’t really add anything to the retail offering of the
town, with most of the products already available elsewhere in the High Street.

**Presentation - Maldon - Score 43%**
The presentation of stalls was rather inconsistent and
most stalls had no covering canvass (let alone matching
canvasses), although this may have been due to the
unseasonably pleasant weather at the time of the
assessment. There was also no visible refuse
collection, but given the types of good on sales this is
something that is largely unnecessary.

### III RETAIL PROVISION

**Total Section Score:**

* Maldon  78%

**Range - Maldon - Score 94%**
The range of shops in Maldon is generally excellent. It includes a mixture of high street
stores (Morrisons, Marks & Spencer, Co-op, Boots, Dorothy Perkins and Stead & Simpson)
and independents. There are five butchers, seven bakers, two bookshops, seven banks, an
electrical shop, a baby shop, clothes shops, a leisure shop, a number or newsagents and
many hairdressers.

**Shopping Environment - Maldon - Score 63%**
The shopping environment is generally pleasant and most of the shop fronts are well
maintained. However, one or two appear rather rundown, particularly to the lower end of
the High Street towards High Street East Car Park. In addition, it is unfortunate that one of
the least attractive buildings at the west end of the High Street, the former Woolworths
shop is now empty. Whilst little can be done about this, it is perhaps worth endeavouring to
work with the owner of the building see whether art can be displayed in the windows.

There is little visible CCTV in the High Street (apart from on specific buildings and the
corner of Wenlock Way) and consideration could be given to installing some more.
However, at the time of the second visit there were signs warning of pick pockets.
IV CATERING FACILITIES

Total Section Score:
Maldon 80%

Range - Maldon - Score 80%
There is an extensive range of catering facilities in Maldon. This includes over 25 pubs in and around the town, Greek, Italian, Chinese, Indian and traditional English restaurants/take-aways. In addition, there are fast food outlets including a McDonalds.

External Physical Condition - Maldon - Score 80%
The frontages of the catering outlets are generally well kept and suited to their surroundings. A-boards are all adequately positioned, without causing obstruction to pedestrians.

V TOILETS AND BABY CHANGE FACILITIES

Total Section Score:
Maldon 84%

Location - Maldon - Score 95%
There are two main public lavatories in Maldon, the first being in Butt Lane Car Park and the second in White Horse Car Park. There is also an automated lavatory in White Horse Car Park and further lavatories at Promenade Park.

The Butt Lane Car Park and White Horse Car Park lavatories are both well placed to serve visitors, being in the two main car parks and close to the High Street.

Layout & Design - Maldon - Score 90%
Both main toilet blocks are well laid-out, with sufficient space for ease of access.

Fixtures & Fittings - Maldon - Score 88%
The fixtures at the Butt Lane Car Park lavatories were of reasonable quality, in stainless steel. The lavatories include mirrors, flat surfaces and hand dryers.

At the toilets adjacent to the White Horse Car Park, the fittings are ceramic, of a decent quality and matching. The automatic lavatory has standard fixtures that can't be altered and whilst these aren’t particularly easy to use, they are adequate.

Baby Changing - Maldon - Score 71%
Baby changing is available to both sexes at the Butt Lane car park toilets and in general this is an excellent example of baby changing facilities. They are in working order, very clean and dedicated provision has been made for the disposal of nappies. However, whilst there is a pocket for covers, this was empty at the time of the first visit.
Interestingly, whilst there is no visible baby changing facilities at the White Horse Car Park lavatories, they do benefit from an attendant and a sign suggests that baby changing facilities can be provided on request.

**Maintenance & Cleanliness - Maldon - Score 76%**

The lavatories in Butt Lane Car Park are well lit and sufficiently ventilated. They were clean at the time of the first and third visits (not inspected during the second visit) and included sufficient supply of loo roll and soap.

The white Horse Car Park lavatories were bright and well maintained, with all having sufficient loo roll and soap. They are well ventilated and lighting is good. The automated lavatory in the car park was reasonably clean when inspected.

The main lavatory block at Promenade Park was also well maintained, but wasn’t entirely clean at the time of the inspection. Whilst there was sufficient loo roll in each cubicle and soap in the dispensers, there was a faulty light in need of repair.

**VI INFORMATION PROVISION**

Total Section Score:
Maldon 72%

**TIC - Location & Accessibility - Maldon - Score 91%**

The Tourist Information Centre is located on Wenlock Way, between the High Street and Butt Lane Car Park. This is a very suitable location and it is well signposted from the key areas within the town, included White Horse Car Park. There is a slope into the TIC rather than a step, making it easily accessible for people with limited mobility.

There is also an information point at Promenade Park, but this wasn’t open at the time of the visits.

**TIC - Opening Times - Maldon - Score 70%**

In common with the Burnham TIC, the Maldon TIC is open from 10am until 4pm, Monday to Saturday throughout the year. Whilst it is probably less of an issue in Maldon, consideration could be given to opening on Sundays in the summer.
The opening times are clearly displayed on the door.

**TIC - Information Range - Maldon - Score 80%**

The range of information is very good. Whilst there isn’t much in the way of national or regional information, information on the rest of Essex and Maldon district itself is comprehensive. The leaflets are well presented, but don’t appear to be particularly well labelled, so for visitors it may be difficult to distinguish between local information and information in relation to other areas at first glance.

**Service - Maldon - Score 82%**

During the face to face visit, the member of staff was asked about children’s activities. They offered a polite welcome and displayed a good knowledge of the local area. They used a map to show the locations of suitable attractions and places to park, offering the map to the assessor at the end of the visit. They also provided leaflets for a large variety of attractions in the wider area and provided an email address for the council in order to enable the assessor to enquire about children’s swimming and sporting activities during the school holidays. The only area in which the service could be faulted was that the member of staff didn’t provide a fairly obvious piece of literature that was available within the TIC, namely the *Kidding Around* magazine. However, this is a particularly minor point and service was generally commendable.

In addition to the visit, the TIC was sent an email enquiry asking about river walks. The response was received in just under an hour and fifteen minutes - clearly very efficient service. It was professionally written and provided a good level of detail. The response indicated that a leaflet for the Maritime Trail could be sent by post and suggested that further walks could be downloaded from the Council website. It also offered further assistance and provided the postal address of the TIC.

*Please note, the above score only reflects the service experienced during the face to face inspection.*

**Information Boards - Maldon - Score 75%**

There are a number of information boards around the town, in varying locations and styles.

The car parks benefit from particularly good information boards on the reverse of the signs detailing parking costs and information. These feature pictures of and information about key tourist attractions in the town, as well as a map. They are of
very high quality and a good example of best practice. However, it is a great shame that they are positioned on the reverse of the parking information boards as this makes access restricted, with cars parking directly adjacent to them. In addition, they have no dedicated lighting and would not generally be easy to read for those arriving at night. These boards can also be found in Promenade Park.

Additional information boards can be found on both the Butt Street and White Horse car park toilets. These comprise large maps of the town centre, combined with adverts for local businesses. They are well located and have suitable adjacent surfaces, but again the lighting is poor.

Further information boards aimed specifically aimed at tourists can be found between White Horse Car Park and the High Street. These are very big and clearly were of good quality when first erected, but are suffering somewhat from neglect. They are also poorly lit and not in a particularly appealing area (although it is worth noting that this is a sensible area given its proximity to both the main car park and the High Street). Consideration could be given to improving these boards and providing additional lighting as they could certainly improve the passageway in which they are located if sufficient funding was available.

**Other Information Sources - Maldon - Score 80%**

The District Council recently updated the district guide, and whilst the last iteration was of a decent standard, the new one exceeds it in many respects. Design is of an exceptionally high standard, making use of bright colours, simple modern fonts and high quality landscape photography to create an aesthetically pleasing document.

The front cover uses an almost iconic photograph of St Peter’s Chapel in the sunset, which whilst striking and highly recognisable to those with knowledge of the district, is perhaps slightly too moody and doesn’t give an adequate insight into what the district has to offer. However, this is a minor criticism and it would be churlish to suggest it significantly detracts from the quality of the brochure.

As per the previous iteration of the document, the guide includes an introduction to the district which whilst simple, provides a good overview of the district’s tourism product. Following the contents page is a double page spread covering the two key towns. This includes a brief overview of each as well as a number of pictures. The brochure then makes mention of the three main areas of the district and the villages that can be found
within them, before providing a map of the area and directions for arrival. The map
provides good coverage of the district but could perhaps be extended to show the main
routes into the area (as per the directions).

The brochure is then split into a number of sections, including Step Back, By the Water,
Indulge, The Great Outdoors and Special Treats. Step Back provides information on the key
historical attractions in the districts as well as an overview of Byrnoth, the Saxon Warrior.
By the water outlines the water-base activities on offer, whilst Indulge relates to shopping
(the latter feels slightly forced, perhaps because the district has a relatively small retail
offering). The Great Outdoors gives an overview of the wildlife and walking activities within
the district. It cross-references the booklets and maps available from the TIC, something
which should be commended. Special Treats highlights the choice of food and drink on offer
in the district and uses photography of some of the area’s products to provide a tantalising
overview of what is available. Aside from the Indulge section, these elements neatly and
accurately segment the tourism products in the district.

The brochure goes on to outline 12 facts about the district. These are generally interesting
and worthy of a place in the document. The following section provides a useful calendar of
events (it is assumed that the brochure will be used for more than one year, hence the lack
of dates). Reference is made to further information on the website.

The final elements of the brochure cover accommodation, how to make a booking and
where to obtain further information. It provides a useful overview with regards to the
quality assurance standards. Details of accommodation establishments are well laid out and
easy to understand, and have helpfully been broken down by area and type. Following the
accommodation section is a list of attractions, with telephone numbers (whilst space is
limited, thought could be given to including URLs in future).

The back page includes a photographic competition which is a nice addition, as well as
potentially providing Maldon District Council with a way of obtaining pictures for use on the
website and in future publications.

In common with the guide, the website has recently been updated. This was certainly long
overdue and the new stand-alone site is a welcome and necessary addition to the district’s
tourism marketing collateral. It is pleasing to note that much of the information on the site
is common to the brochure.

However, one key consideration for the future is creating a more coherent sense of brand.
The brochure and the website use different brands (Discover the Maldon District and Visit
the Maldon District), with differing design styles and fonts. This really is something that
should be addressed in order to reduce consumer confusion and create a single, strong brand for the area.

This issue aside, the website is generally very good and provides an excellent tool to help potential visitors plan and book their trip.

The site includes video clips of the area which is a great way to give people a taste of what is on offer before they visit. Aside from an overview of the district, the home page also features details of the photographic competition and Moot Hall tours. The main sections of the site are set out on the left-hand side and are highly visible as soon as visitors land on the home page. On the sub pages there are easy to see sections providing directions to the district and key contact information.

The accommodation section is easy to use, featuring a browse facility along with a fairly comprehensive search. However, it should be noted that on the results/overview page each establishment features a button which says “Details &”. It is assumed this should be “Details & Availability”. Clearly this needs attention.

Whilst the accommodation section doesn’t include online booking facilities, it does provide availability. As consumers become ever more sophisticated in their use of the internet, many are demanding online booking and in instances where it isn’t available they will simply look elsewhere. However, the provision of availability at least goes someway to reducing this possibility.

Navigation of the Things to Do section is intuitive and easy to use and broken down into fairly obvious sections. However, these sections may work better if they directly reflected those included in the brochure. With regards to the details of activities and attractions, the results pages would benefit from the inclusion of more photography as they are rather bland at this moment in time.

The Visitor Information section provides useful contact details as well as a link to tide times and a weather forecast.

The map search is a fantastic feature and allows potential visitors to augment their searches with some geographical context. The only element that could be improved is to include the title and introductory paragraph above the map, as those with smaller screens will not be able to see these at first glance.
One addition to the site, which would no doubt be welcomed by all, would be the inclusion of a photo gallery. There are some stunning landscapes in the district and it would be worth highlighting these on the website.

All in all, the website is simple to use and aesthetically pleasing.
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<tr>
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In addition to the three visits to each town, a further visit to the district was made in order to assess walks, trails and cycle routes. Whilst this primarily focused on the two towns, it also considered the area in between.

The scope of the exercise was principally to assess the quality of literature provided with regards to walks, trails and cycle routes as well as spending a small amount of time investigating the quality of signage and paths, in addition to assessing how easy certain paths were to follow. The latter was limited in its extent by both the timescales available and the relatively extensive number of paths under review.

Literature was obtained from both TICs. The staff at Maldon TIC were a little more explicit in terms of the provision of information, outlining where routes went, how they had been created and any additional literature (such as O.S. maps) required in order to follow them. However, that is not to say that the member of staff at Burnham TIC was anything less than professional and sufficiently knowledgeable to ensure visitors have enough information.

The quality of the literature is varied. The written word is generally very good, with most documents providing sound descriptions of routes that are easy to follow and the majority include detailed instructions with regards to the course of each route. Where relevant, this is also backed by well written information on points of interest around the route. However, whilst the written word is of a high quality, the presentation is often rather poor and there is also a rather confusing array of publications from a range of public sector agencies.

In order to highlight the positive and negative elements of each publication in more detail, each type has been assessed.

**Maldon District Council - Maldon Millennium Meander and A Walk to Beeleigh**

These two publications differ in style from the others produced by Maldon District Council and therefore they have been analysed separately.

**Maldon Millennium Meander** features a colour photo on the cover, with another included inside. The map is hand-drawn and although clearly to scale isn’t particularly clear (although given that it is waymarked there is no suggestion that it isn’t easy to follow). Consideration should be given to replacing it with an Ordnance Survey style map. This is especially important given that the publication doesn’t include any instructions with regards to how to follow the route. Whilst commendable efforts have clearly been made to
ensure the publication remains on one page of A4 paper, this needs to be considered in the context of the need for further detail and information with regards to points of interest.

In terms of *A Walk to Beeleigh*, the presentation is reasonable. It includes a colour picture on the front and details of what can be seen on the walk, with an additional colour picture and map included inside. The map is reasonable, although the route marked on it doesn’t entirely appear to correspond to the route described. In addition, a section of the right-hand side of the map appears to be missing. Furthermore, there is a significantly greater area of the district covered by the map than is entirely necessary. Greater detail of the route could be provided if the map only focussed on the relevant area.

At 30p each, both publications are reasonable value. Although both publications provide the contact details for Maldon TIC, only one has Maldon District Council branding.
Maldon District Council Trails

These publications comprise *The Maldon Trail*, *The Maldon Maritime Trail*, *The Pillbox Trail*, *The Battle of Maldon* and *Dengie Coastal Area*. The look and feel of these publications is consistent (although the *Dengie Coastal Area* is produced on slightly different paper) and this gives the feeling that they are a coordinated set.

Whilst all five publications follow a similar format, *The Maldon Trail*, *The Maldon Maritime Trail* and *The Battle of Maldon* in particular use the same design and layout. This comprises a folded A3 sheet with a hand drawn illustration on the cover with an accompanying explanation of the route included. Each has a clear map (taking up the equivalent of an A5 sheet of paper) with the route clearly marked in green. The rest of each publication is generally taken up with detail of how to follow the route and interesting background to some of the features along the way (with accompanying illustrations).

*The Pillbox Trail* is a smaller publication, covering one A4 page folded. However, the look of the publication is largely the same of the previous three, with the exception of the style of map used to show the route (still very easy to follow) and the inclusion of a map of the wider area to show how to get to the start of the route.

The *Dengie Coastal Area* publication is similar in style and size to the first three. However, it differs in that it covers a number of walks and therefore includes a less detailed map and no instructions with regards to how to follow the routes. It does however provide a lot of useful background information on the area (with accompanying illustrations), details of the main towns/villages, information about public transport and car parking, the Country Code and contact information for the TICs.

There are a few negative points of note with regards to these publications. They are rather out of date and this means that some features on the maps and details are no longer relevant (including the location of Maldon TIC and the addresses of both TICs). The other negative relates to the trails going through Maldon. It would be very beneficial to include signs along each route, including information about key areas of interest. At the moment all of the information is included within the publications, but it would add an extra
dimension to the town based routes if there were plaques, information boards or small waymarkers on certain buildings.

Conservation Walks
The Conservation Walks have been produced by Maldon District Council following permission from DEFRA. The cover includes a range of symbols showing the type of walk and what can be seen along the way.

Although basic, they are reasonably well presented and include a very good Ordnance Survey map. Whilst they include the Country Code and contact details for the TIC, they don’t actually provide much in the way of additional information and the reverse of the map (i.e. the front and back cover, and middle section) do not make most effective use of space.

Maldon District Council Cycle Routes
The accompanying literature for these cycle routes is relatively simple and includes directions, a few details of points of interest, brief information about where refreshments might be available and on Route 4, the contact details for the TIC.

The maps aren’t to scale and appear to have been drawn on a similar basis to a tube map (i.e. using straight lines). They are therefore rather confusing and in some cases bear little semblance to reality. In addition, the directions sometime mention features that are not included on the maps.
Route number two was taken by East of England Tourism as one of its key cycle routes for the region. Given that routes do not appear to be waymarked by numbered signs, there seems little point in keeping *The Blackwater Ride* as Route 4 and instead it would make sense to renumber it as Route 2.

**Fancy a Bike Ride**

There are four routes in this series, all of which have been put together by the Mid Essex PCT in conjunction with Healthy Living Solutions, Essex and South Suffolk Community Rail Partnership and The Big Lottery Fund. It is clear that these have been professionally put together and they are well presented. These are not traditional cycle routes; rather they are centred around the hire of bikes from Raven Auto Spares in Burnham on Crouch.

Each one includes a reasonably detailed map (incorporating details of pubs, cafes, restaurants, toilets and train stations), details of distances, the time the route takes to complete, the level of difficulty and contact details for the hire shop.

These are a good example of easy to understand route maps aimed at a more casual cyclist. Whilst they may lack the detailed instructions of the Maldon District Council cycle route literature, they are professionally presented and nonetheless provide sufficient detail to make them useful guides.

**Essex County Council Walks**

The TIC provided two leaflets relating to walks conceptualised by Essex County Council; *Blackwater Rail Trail* and *Bradwell Cockle Spit*.

The *Blackwater Rail Trail* leaflet is on a sheet of A4. The leaflet includes an Ordnance Survey map which is reasonably easy to follow, but suggests that those using the route should use a more detailed Ordnance Survey map.

Whilst the leaflet is very colourful and reasonably well presented, it lacks detail with regard to how to follow the route or points of interest along the way. This is a shame as there is no doubt some interesting history behind the route and the railway which once served it. It
does however include contact details for both those responsible for the upkeep of the route and Essex County Council.

*Bradwell Cockle Spit* is a slightly strange leaflet, in effect opening back to front. This colourful and well presented leaflet includes information about the spit (including details of the wildlife that can be found on the spit), an attractive illustrated map with information about points of interest and a number of key details about the route such as distance, time taken, difficult level, habitat types, parking/public transport and the accompanying Ordnance Survey map. It is professionally presented, easy to follow and small enough to be carried in a user’s pocket.

Two Rivers’ Way

Produced by East of England Tourism, the Two Rivers’ Way was originally Maldon District Council’s Route 2. This is very professionally presented and represents an example of best practice.

It includes simple, numbered details of how to follow the route which is presented on an Ordnance Survey map (which includes shops, pubs, picnic sites, places of interest etc). For each numbered instruction symbols in relation to the relevant services that can be found in the area are included.

Aside from the route instructions, it also incorporates points of interest in the order that they are found along the route. Whilst these are fairly limited in their scope, they at least add an additional dimension to the route, making it a more tourist friendly product.

In addition, the leaflet includes ‘essential information’ such as car parks, public transport, difficulty, distance, terrain and places where bikes can be repaired (including phone numbers).

Printed on an A3 sheet, the leaflet folds four ways and as such is A5 size and easy to carry or store.

In summary, any good walking or cycling maps/literature must be sufficiently detailed, yet easy to understand. They should include the contact details for the TICs, MDC branding and
a date of publication. Consideration should also be given to the fact that some walkers and cyclists will want to print them off before they arrive and as such, the number of pages should be kept to a minimum.

Whilst Maldon District Council has little influence over the other agencies that have created routes in the area, it can at least ensure some consistency with regards to its own routes and the publications that accompany them. Consideration could be given to providing a branded folder to accompany the walks so that people can choose to collect them en-masse and save them in one place. A plastic cover could also be provided to ensure they remain dry during inclement weather.

Ultimately, in terms of design and continuity of branding a balance must be struck. This needs to consider the available budget and the extent to which Maldon District Council wants to achieve a consistent feel to the walking and cycling products on offer. It is suggested that a comprehensive compendium of walks and cycle routes could be drawn together as part of a dedicated walking/cycling tourism product, promoted alongside relevant accommodation etc. The district lends itself well to both walking and cycling, being relatively flat and generally very beautiful. This clearly presents a decent marketing opportunity, but if the Council is to take advantage, it has to ensure any product is coherent and this includes the literature produced to accompany walks and cycle routes.

With regards to the routes themselves, a small number of route sections were checked to assess how easy they are to follow and the presence/quality of waymarking.

Whilst the assessment followed a week of good weather, the footpaths that were checked were all in good condition and well maintained. In general footpaths are marked using wooden signs. These are of good quality and well maintained throughout.

Whilst many of the signposts include a series of letters and numbers, that no doubt represent either the route or the location on an Ordnance Survey map, it is not clear to the casual walker what these represent. In many other areas in the region footpaths are clearly marked with details that correspond to the literature for that particular route. This helps walkers to ensure they remain on the right path and reduces reliance on maps.

In some instances, the signs included a small badge which indicated they were part of a footpath created or
maintained by Essex County Council. It would be relatively easy and cost-effective to consider attaching similar badges to the waymarkers along the routes created by Maldon District Council. These could indicate which route the walker was on as well as the point they had reached (i.e. they could correspond to numbers in the accompanying literature).

As previously mentioned, it would also be worthwhile considering using plaques to waymark the trails in Maldon. This would not only make it easier to follow each route, but would also provide an additional aspect to the route and make each one a more coherent product in its own right.

Cycle routes are apparently entirely devoid of any waymarkers (even the East of England Tourism cycle route wasn’t marked) and this is something that should be addressed. The pictures on the following page illustrate some examples of cycle route signage and consideration should be given to adding signage to existing routes. This will give Maldon District Council the opportunity to brand its routes consistently, creating and easy to follow and lucid product in each case.
These pictures illustrate various types of cycle route waymarkers. The first shows a sign on a cycle route in Suffolk and illustrates that the cycle route is both part of a local route put in place by the Council and part of the National Cycle Network. The sign second from left in the bottom row is French and very simply shows the direction of the route and the number of the way marker. The sign second from right in the bottom row uses colours in the front wheel to indicate which route the cyclist is following and the direction of travel.
Aside from the collateral considered as a central part of this audit, and in addition to the walks/cycle routes, the events listings and calendars produced by the District Council have also been considered. Three documents have been assessed:

What’s On in Maldon District
Activities Afloat in Maldon District 2009
Promenade Park Summer Activities 2009

All three are of similar style and layout, although What’s On is an A4 document whilst the other two are essentially A5. In each case, the level of information included is exceptional (particularly in What’s On).

What’s On includes a month by month guide to events, with events listed by date. In each case it includes the name of the event, brief details, ticket prices, contact details and where relevant, a website address. There are specific sections for specific festivals including the Maldon Arts Festival, the Tillingham Festival of Arts and the Little Totham Pro-Am Music Festival.

Activities Afloat lists events and trips taking place on the district’s waterways/coast. These are primarily listed by type, with details for each relevant venue/organisation. These include information about times and costs, as well as contact details for booking tickets. Details are augmented with pictures of the relevant boat or location.

Promenade Park Summer Activities details the types of activities and facilities on offer at Promenade Park. In addition, it includes the details of events comprising a brief overview, dates and where applicable, contact details. The back page outlines car park charges, and also gives details of the Museum in the Park and boat trips, as well as providing contact details for the TIC. Again, the document includes a number of relevant photographs.

Whilst the level of information is to be commended, it is evident that none of the documents have been professionally produced. They lack the branding associated with either Discover The Maldon District or Visit The Maldon District and as such effectively bear little in common with tourism branding for the area.

 Whilst the two smaller documents (Activities Afloat and Promenade Park) are reasonably well laid-out, the What’s On document is very ‘busy’ and as such not entirely easy to follow. Consideration must be given to ways in which this information can be displayed in a
more aesthetically pleasing way. Efforts should also be made to ensure that production is more professional (budget permitting) and consistent branding is carried across all three.

In short, it is rather a shame that such a wealth of carefully collated information is presented in such an unappealing fashion.
1 INTRODUCTION

A key element when developing marketing plans is an understanding of the environment in which the organisation operates. The marketing environment can be divided into the internal environment, the micro environment and the macro environment. The micro environment is the external environment that Maldon District Council directly interacts with. The macro environment includes all external factors that may impact on the Council that the organisation does not directly interact with. The following diagram illustrates the marketing environment that Maldon District Council operates in:

This report has provided evidence about the micro environment - visitors (Appendix I and III), the local community (Appendix IV) and the tourism industry and tourism partners (Appendix V and VI). An analysis of the internal environment is outside the scope of this report.

This appendix provides a brief summary of elements of the macro environment that are relevant to Maldon District Council’s marketing plan. This can be used as a starting point for future planning. Please see the bibliography (Appendix XI) for links to the reports referenced in this section.
2 POLITICAL FACTORS

The current Parliament was first summoned on Wednesday 11 May 2005, so will cease to exist at midnight on Monday 10 May 2010. A general election to elect the new Parliament must be held by no later than Thursday 3 June 2010.11

The latest Ipsos MORI Political Monitor shows that among those absolutely certain to vote, the Conservative Party lead the Labour Party by 16 points. The Conservatives are on 40% (up from 38% last month), Labour is on 24% (up three points) and the Lib Dems on 18% (down one from 19%).

Jeremy Hunt, the Shadow Culture Secretary for the Conservative Party, has spoken about the party’s policies for tourism. He said, “when setting out his vision for economic and social recovery, David Cameron argued that our economy needed to become more green, more local and more family-friendly.” The Conservative Party aim to work with tourism businesses to make the British economy greener, more sustainable and less energy-intensive.

Part of the Conservative Parties objectives for tourism would be to encourage Local Authorities to take a greater interest in the promotion of tourism for their areas. Jeremy Hunt said that the Conservatives want to see a clearer structure for the marketing of both domestic and international tourism. This would mean disbanding the Regional Development Agency while allowing local authorities to combine forces to continue their work where they choose to do so. The policies would include allowing local authorities to keep any increase in business rates that they attract for six years and giving councils the discretionary power to cut business rates however they like.

3 ECONOMIC FACTORS

The UK economy officially went into recession when the Office of National Statistics announced that the preliminary estimate for GDP showed negative growth in the last two quarters of 2009.12 In the April budget report the forecast for the UK economy in 2009 was reduced from -1.25% to -3.5%, with a forecast of 1.25% growth in 2010.13

11 http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/faq/elections/what-is-the-last-possible-date-for-a-general-election
12 http://www.statistics.gov.uk/cci/nugget.asp?id=192
13 http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/bud_bud09_speech.htm
The latest monthly economic outlook for the East of England (produced by the East of England Development Agency) reports that increasing numbers of businesses have reported an apparent bottoming-out of the recession, with survival being their priority in 2009 and hopes of an upturn in 2010. The pace of unemployment growth has continued to ease, although redundancies that occurred in late 2008 and early 2009 are finally feeding through into employment figures.

Whilst buyer interest in housing has increased, this has yet to translate into an increase in actual purchases or transactions. House prices showed some signs of stabilising in April. However, as sales and transactions continue to stagnate it is too early to say whether prices are on a path to recovery.

Economic output (GVA) in the East of England is forecast to fall by 4.1 per cent in 2009 (UK down by 4.0 per cent). Claimant unemployment is predicted to peak at 4.5 per cent in 2010, and employment levels will recover by 2015.

Consumer confidence has gradually increased over quarter 2 2009 according to the Nationwide Consumer Confidence Index, with an overall increase from 41 points in April 2009 to 58 points in June 2009. A third of people now believe that the economic situation will be better than today in six months time, with 42% expecting the economy to be the same and less than a quarter (23%) thinking it will be worse.

In the June 2009 report 76% of consumers said that the current economic situation is bad compared to 52% in June 2008. Consumers are not confidence about the job market, with 68% believing there are now few jobs available and 54% believing there will be few jobs available in six months’ time.

4 SOCIAL FACTORS

A major social factor that will influence tourism in the Maldon District is the London 2012 Olympics. The Games are forecast to generate tourism gains totalling £2.1bn (at 2006 prices) over the period 2008-17 for the UK as a whole. London will gain £1.47bn of additional expenditure (i.e. total less displaced expenditure), with £620m going to the regions. The pre-Games period is responsible for 15% of total tourism benefits, the Games themselves account for 31% and the remaining 54% is to be generated after the Games.

The reality is that the full economic impact on the Maldon District will depend on a number of specifics:
• Proximity of Olympic/Paralympic events to Maldon District
• Ease of access from Maldon to these venues
• Number of training camps situated in the area
• Whether Maldon District Council undertakes any campaigns capture the maximum share of the domestic London displacement flow
• Whether the Maldon District hosts other events in the lead to and after the events. Arts and cultural festivals and other sport events provide a specific reason to come to the region
• The number and scale of Cultural Olympiad events in the area
• Any negative consumer perceptions about the area are challenged, in particular that relating to ‘Welcome’ (e.g. presentation, access, safety, friendliness / helpfulness)

Demographic changes are also forecast to impact on tourism. An ageing population, with high divorce rates, and a higher proportion of ‘reconstituted families’; young adults staying in education (and at home later); more people live on their own; and so on. This all changes the nature of leisure consumption and also makes more important social opportunities with friends and family.14

5 TECHNOLOGICAL FACTORS

Consumers are increasingly using the internet to make travel purchases. 20 million UK residents searched for travel during 2007 and 51% bought travel options online. The tourism industry has been revolutionised by changes in consumer decision making and booking behaviour as a result of an increased use of the internet. However, many Small or Medium Enterprises (SMEs) lack the resources, economies of scale or expertise to meet consumer expectations for online booking.

Increased use of the internet and the rising popularity of social networking sites mean that people are more networked with each other, which has implications for the importance of peer group opinions and the relationship between businesses and consumers. Since customers are more empowered, there has been a greater fragmentation of to match specific tastes, preferences and requirements.

14 What is the Future of Domestic Tourism to 2015? (VisitBritain, 2005)
6 ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS

According to *Living with Climate Change in the East of England*, our climate is changing and will continue to change over this century and beyond. In the East of England, summers will become hotter and drier, while winters will be milder and wetter and there will be an increased risk of extreme climate events and rising sea levels. If we can incorporate resilience to climate change in the decisions we take today we will be better prepared for the future.

Some priorities that have been identified for tourism include:

- To plan and manage tourism development and activities to encourage year-round tourism, and more sustainable destinations, products and businesses (e.g. through use of a 'green audit kit').
- To improve opportunities for tourists not to have to drive, such as public transport, green lanes, and cycling.
- To promote local products and services to retain visitor spend within the local economy and reduce ‘food miles’
- To provide training and education to improve skills levels in the tourist industry.

Climate change may ultimately become an opportunity to the tourism sector. TNS Travel and Tourism research confirms that 45% of British consumers are willing to pay more for environmentally friendly products and 34% said that green considerations influenced their purchase decisions in the area of travel. 19% of British consumers are likely to change their holiday or travel plans to reduce their environmental impact. This highlights the fact that the tourism industry must provide consumers with sufficient information to allow them to form educated opinions on companies’ attitudes to the environment.
APPENDIX X
MONITORING KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
1 INTRODUCTION

Maldon District Council plans to invest in promotional activity to increase the value of its visitor economy and to set a series of targets and measures to achieve this. This appendix makes reference to the performance indicators included in IDeA’s Single Improvement Tool. They are grouped under Satisfaction Indicators, Economic Indicators and Sustainability Indicators. There is also a section on Marketing Activity Indicators, based on indicators adopted by Destination Performance UK (DPUK).

The Single Improvement Tool has been developed for local authority cultural services by IDeA (Improvement and Development Agency for local government) in association with the key national cultural organisations. Tourism, as it forms part of the national cultural services block, has been included in the process. The tool applies equally well to local authority tourism services, even if they are based in other service areas such as economic development or regeneration. The tool contains a list of suggested performance indicators for tourism services. These are based on a set suggested in the Tourism Sustainability Group (TSG) report to the European Commission, and on indicators that have been adopted by Destination Performance UK and the Welsh Audit Commission.

With limited budgets, it may be unrealistic for the Economic Development Team to monitor all of the performance indicators shown below. It is recommended that the team select the most relevant performance indicators, based on the activity proposed in the Marketing Plan.

This appendix also includes information about which sources of data can be used to monitor the performance indicator and how the data might be obtained. Where this report or a report in the Bibliography (see Appendix XI) provides the data, the most current results are shown.
## 2 ECONOMIC INDICATORS

The economic indicators from the Single Improvement Tool are shown below along with potential sources of data.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance Indicator</th>
<th>Sources of Data</th>
<th>Current Data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Number of day and overnight visitors (+ % increase/decrease) | Cambridge Model | Staying Trips: 180,900\(^{15}\)  
Day Trips: 2,779,000  
\(^{15}\) Economic Impact of Tourism; Maldon 2007 (East of England Tourism, 2008) |
| Value of visitor spend | Cambridge Model | Total Visitor Spend: £128,621,500\(^{16}\)  
\(^{16}\) Economic Impact of Tourism; Maldon 2007 (East of England Tourism, 2008) |
| Visitor spend per head (+ % increase/decrease) | Visitor Survey | £47.29 per person per day on average (see Appendix I) |
| Net Local Authority spend on tourism per visitor | Cambridge Model and Local Authority budget information | - |
| Net Local Authority spend on tourism per head of population | Census and population estimates (www.nomisweb.co.uk), and Local Authority budget information | - |
| Annual average % bed space and bedroom occupancy of accommodation | East of England Tourism’s Occupancy Surveys | - \(^{17}\)  
\(^{17}\) There were only two participants in the occupancy survey from the Maldon District in 2008. Maldon District Council can improve the occupancy data available by encouraging businesses to take part in the occupancy survey. |
| Number of tourism related jobs | Cambridge Model | Total actual tourism related employment: 2,741\(^{18}\)  
\(^{18}\) Economic Impact of Tourism; Maldon 2007 (East of England Tourism, 2008) |
## 3 SUSTAINABILITY INDICATORS

The sustainability indicators from the Single Improvement Tool are shown below along with potential sources of data.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance Indicator</th>
<th>Sources of Data</th>
<th>Current Data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Existence of an agreed and monitored sustainable tourism and action plan</td>
<td>Maldon District Council</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of residents indicating that they are satisfied with the local impact of tourism</td>
<td>Residents Survey</td>
<td>89% (see Appendix IV)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of bed spaces per 1,000 population</td>
<td>Census and population estimates (<a href="http://www.nomisweb.co.uk">www.nomisweb.co.uk</a>) and Local Authority Information Profile from East of England Tourism</td>
<td>Current population: 62,400&lt;sup&gt;19&lt;/sup&gt; Total bed spaces: 2,279 37 bed spaces per 1,000 population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ratio of number of visitors to local population</td>
<td>Census and population estimates (<a href="http://www.nomisweb.co.uk">www.nomisweb.co.uk</a>) and Cambridge Model</td>
<td>Current population: 62,400 Staying Trips: 180,900 Day Trips: 2,779,000 Ratio: 47:1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of visitors arriving by means other than by car or plane</td>
<td>Visitor Survey, Conversion Research, Brochure Users Survey</td>
<td>32% (see Appendix III)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of tourism enterprises participating in quality/green tourism accreditation schemes</td>
<td>Regional Destination Management System/East of England Tourism</td>
<td>0% accredited with Green Tourism Business Scheme (GTBS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0% accredited with David Bellamy Conservation Award</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourism related jobs as a percentage of total local jobs</td>
<td>Cambridge Model</td>
<td>Percentage of all employment: 9.5%&lt;sup&gt;20&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of tourism enterprises that have carried out an accessibility assessment with a view to enhancing provision for disabled visitors</td>
<td>Local Industry Survey</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>19</sup> Mid-Year Population Estimates on [www.nomisweb.co.uk](http://www.nomisweb.co.uk)

<sup>20</sup> *Economic Impact of Tourism; Maldon 2007* (East of England Tourism, 2008)
### 4 SATISFACTION INDICATORS

The satisfaction indicators from the Single Improvement Tool are shown below along with potential sources of data.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance Indicator</th>
<th>Sources of Data</th>
<th>Current Data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% of visitors who rate the overall visitor experience as good or excellent</td>
<td>Visitor Survey/Conversion Research</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of customers who consider the overall impression made by the TIC service to be good or excellent</td>
<td>TIC Users Survey</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of stakeholders who consider the general promotion of the destination to be good or excellent</td>
<td>Local Industry Satisfaction Survey</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of stakeholders who consider the tourist information service to be good or excellent</td>
<td>Local Industry Satisfaction Survey</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of stakeholders who consider the destination website to be good or excellent</td>
<td>Local Industry Satisfaction Survey</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5 MARKETING ACTIVITY INDICATORS

The marketing activity indicators, based on indicators adopted by DPUK, are shown below along with potential sources of data. Before targets can be established Maldon District Council should measure the success of its current promotional activity, which will provide a benchmark for improving performance. This will allow Maldon District Council to set realistic targets for growth and design future marketing and promotional activity to ensure such targets are met.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance Indicator</th>
<th>Sources of Data</th>
<th>Current Data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Return on investment (ROI) for marketing campaigns</td>
<td>Conversion Research</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of unique visitors to <a href="http://www.visitmaldondistrict.co.uk">www.visitmaldondistrict.co.uk</a></td>
<td>Website statistics</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average time dwelt on the site per visit</td>
<td>Website statistics</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value of bookings generated by the local Destination Management System (DMS)</td>
<td>DMS statistics</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net cost per Tourism Information Centre user</td>
<td>Count of TIC users and budget information</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost per response for the main promotional campaign</td>
<td>Count of responses to promotional campaigns and budget</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of users who consider the destination brochure to be good or excellent</td>
<td>Brochure Users Survey</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6 SOURCE OF DATA

6.1 TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRE USERS

The total footfall at the TIC should be measured. This can be done with an electronic counter or by a manual counter by TIC staff. The TIC should also record the total contacts, including:

- The number of telephone calls
- The number of letters and faxes
- The number of emails
- The number of bookings taken by the TIC or accommodation services

In terms of customer satisfaction, customers who use the TIC (whether in person or by telephone, email etc) can be asked to complete a satisfaction survey. Customers should be asked to rate their satisfaction with the following aspects using the scale Excellent, Good, Satisfactory/Average, Poor, Very Poor:

- Speed of Service
- Quality of Customer service
- Range of Information available
- Goods and Services available for sale
- Sign-posting (easy to find TIC)
- Accessibility (ease of entry)
- Overall impression

6.2 LOCAL INDUSTRY SATISFACTION SURVEY

A local industry satisfaction survey can be conducted online or by post. Local stakeholders should be asked to rate their satisfaction with the following aspects using the scale Excellent, Good, Satisfactory/Average, Poor, Very Poor:

- General publications produced to promote the destination
- Destination website
- Overall marketing & promotion of destination
- Tourist/Visitor Information Services
- Information provided for, and communications with, Local Tourism Industry
6.3 CONVERSION RESEARCH

Conversion research measures the effectiveness of marketing campaigns in terms of the number of people visiting as a direct result of a specific campaign and evaluates which marketing activities provide the best results. During the design of the marketing concepts East of England Tourism would advise Maldon District Council on the best way to capture consumer data to allow the research to be carried out. Using this method of evaluation will assist with:

- Meeting return on investment (ROI) targets
- Measuring the incremental spend generated by marketing activities
- Assessing the effectiveness of various media channels

The methodology is based on VisitBritain’s model for measuring return on investment. It consists of sending a standardise questionnaire to a randomly selected representative sample of consumers who have responded to campaigns (such as advertising, direct mail, internet, downloads, promotion, etc.), 3-6 months after they have had contact.

The research would target consumers that have made contact with Maldon District Council both offline and online. Offline consumers are normally evaluated using a postal survey. Website visitors registering online or requesting a brochure online are evaluated using a web-based survey.

The research takes into account the various media channels used as part of the marketing activity and would evaluate the proportion of respondents for each promotional media or advertising they have seen.

Respondents would be asked whether they have taken a trip to the area during that time or not. If they have, they are asked whether the information included in the brochure turned a “possible visit into a certainty”. They can respond by saying “definitely”, “probably”, “possibly”, “not at all”, or “don’t know”. Those that say “definitely” are counted as having been totally influenced by the campaign. In addition, it is estimated that 50% of respondents that say “probably” will have visited as a direct result of the campaign, and that 20% of respondents that say “possibly” will have visited as a direct result of the campaign.
APPENDIX XI

BIBLIOGRAPHY
BIBLIOGRAPHY OF SECONDARY DATA FOR MALDON TOURISM STRATEGY

Maldon District Council Reports


The Feasibility of Maldon District as a Potential Tourist Destination (Anglia Polytechnic University Marketing Consultancy Group, January 1998)

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Maldon District Local Development Framework: Adopted Local Development Scheme Second Review (Maldon District Council, August 2007)

Maldon District Local Development Framework: Core Strategy Regulation 25 Consultation (Maldon District Council, 27 – 8 June 2009)

Local Authority Information Profile: Maldon (East of England Tourism, April 2009)

Tourism Partners Reports and Strategies


Creating a Sustainable Future for Tourist Information Centres in the East of England; Draft Strategy (East of England Tourism, June 2009)

East of England Tourism Website Functionality research (Arkenford, March 2009)

Business Buyer Perceptions Research East of England (BDRC, March 2009)


Destination England; How well does it deliver? (VisitBritain, 23rd November 2004) Available from:


UK Visitor Attractions 2002 (VisitBritain, August 2003)

UK Visitor Attractions 2001 (VisitBritain, August 2002)

UK Visitor Attractions 2000 (VisitBritain, August 2001)


Marketing Environment


Chancellor of the Exchequer’s Budget statement (Alastair Darling MP, 22 April 2009) Available from: [http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/bud_bud09_index.htm](http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/bud_bud09_index.htm)

Nationwide Consumer Confidence Index June 2009 (Nationwide, July 2009) Available from: [http://www.nationwide.co.uk/consumer_confidence/default.htm](http://www.nationwide.co.uk/consumer_confidence/default.htm)


Smarter Marketing (East of England Tourism, 2008)


APPENDIX XII
QUESTIONNAIRES
Guide of Attractions

Take the Maldon District Survey 2009 for your Chance to Win!

For a chance to stay at Maldon’s 4 Star Hotel, simply complete the questionnaire and return to:

Economic Development, Maldon District Council,
Princes Road, Maldon CM9 5DL

The prize includes:

• One night accommodation in a standard double or twin room
• Three course buffet dinner in The Brasserie
• Full English breakfast in The Brasserie
• £20 contribution towards either the cost of a Spa treatment of your choice or towards a round of golf
• Complimentary use of the leisure facilities including swimming pool, spa bath, sauna, steam room and gym

Prize courtesy of Five Lakes Hotel, Golf, Country Club & Spa

The Maldon District Visitor Survey 2009

About your visit

1. How did you hear about the Maldon District?
2. Have you, or do you intend to visit the Maldon District?
3. has your decision to visit been made as a
4. In which months will you / did you visit?
5. Which town or village will you visit?
6. what best describes your visit to the maldon District before?
7. What type of accommodation will you stay in?
8. How many nights will you stay?
9. What is the method of transport you will use?
10. Including yourself, please enter the number of people in your immediate family that fall into the following age groups:

Heritage

Burnham-on-Crouch District and Museum
Burnham-on-Crouch 01621 795444

Exmouth Military Services Museum
01621 851602

Maldon Museum
01621 851628

Maldon District Museum
01621 856284

Mangapps Railway Museum
Suite 3, First Floor, Princes Road, Maldon CM9 5DL

Maldon

Bailiffs
01621 792737

Museum of the Gipsies
Latchingdon 01245 223258

Plume Library
01621 856500

Red Hall St.
01621 853779

St John’s Church
01621 854133

St Peter’s on the Green
01621 854724

Tolleshunt Knights
01621 856147

Woodham Mortimer
01621 853212

Woodham Mortimer
01621 854850

Woodham Mortimer
01621 853779

Woodham Mortimer
01621 853779

Woodham Mortimer
01621 853779

Woodham Mortimer
01621 853779

Woodham Mortimer
01621 853779

Woodham Mortimer
01621 853779

Woodham Mortimer
01621 853779
14. Please indicate the extent to which you are prepared to pay more for the following characteristics of a service or holiday product. Please circle the number that best indicates your outlook. 0 means that you would not be prepared to pay more, whilst 10 means you would definitely be prepared to pay more.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Not Pay</th>
<th>Pay More</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To be given individual attention</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For products that use the most advanced technology</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For a fashionable brand</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

15. Different people have different views about themselves. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement on a scale of 0 – 10. Please circle the number that best indicates your outlook. 0 means you strongly disagree and 10 means you strongly agree.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I like to try things that are new to me</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am happy to do my own thing regardless of what others might think</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I prefer to live a relaxed and moderate pace of life</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I find it easy to justify buying expensive alternatives</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts and culture are an important part of who I am</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have a fond liking for things that others might describe as old fashioned</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Function is more important than style</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

16. Which newspapers / magazines do you read on a regular basis?

.................................................. ..................................................

17. Which radio stations do you listen to?

..................................................

18. What is the occupation of the chief income earner in your family?

Industry..........................................

Position..........................................

19. What are your interests?

..................................................

..................................................

..................................................

20. What is your postcode?

..................................................

For entry into our free prize draw please provide your name, age, address, telephone number and email address below.
Good morning/afternoon. I am from East of England Tourism. We are conducting a survey of residents to understand their opinions about the area. It should only take a few minutes and you will be entered into a free draw for £50 of vouchers of your choice. Would you be willing to take part?

Q1 Do you live in the Maldon District?
Yes .............................................. 1  Go to Q2
No ............................................ 2  Thank and close interview

Q2 Would you say that the Maldon District is a tourist area? By tourist area we mean an area that people visit for leisure either for the day, a short break, or holiday.
Yes ............................................. 1
No .............................................. 2

We would like to ask about your opinion of Maldon as a place to visit

Q3 How likely would you be to recommend the Maldon District as a place to visit to someone else, on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is 'very unlikely' and 5 is 'very likely'? (SHOWCARD 1)
Very Unlikely ............................................. 1
Unlikely .................................................. 2
Neither likely or unlikely ..................... 3
Likely .................................................... 4
Very Likely ............................................. 5

Q4 In your opinion, to what extent do the following features currently attract visitors to the Maldon District? For each feature please choose between 'A LOT', 'A LITTLE' or 'NOT AT ALL'. (SHOWCARD 2)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>A LOT</th>
<th>A LITTLE</th>
<th>NOT AT ALL</th>
<th>DON'T KNOW</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Places to eat &amp; drink</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Countryside and wildlife</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locally produced food &amp; drink</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Friendly people</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gardens and parks</td>
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<tr>
<td>Coast &amp; Beaches</td>
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<tr>
<td>Museums, galleries and theatres</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attractive buildings, architecture</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visitor Attractions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Events</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q5 Are there any other features which attract visitors to the Maldon District?
Yes ............................................. 1  Go to Q6
No ............................................... 2  Go to Q7

Q6 Please tell me what are those other features which attract visitors?

Q7 In your opinion, what is the best feature of the Maldon District for visitors?

Q8 In your opinion, what is unique or distinctive about the Maldon District?

Now we would like to know your opinions about how tourists impact on the Maldon District. By tourists we mean people who live outside the District who come to Maldon either for the day or for a staying visit for leisure purposes.

Q9 On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is 'Very Bad Effect', 3 is 'No Effect' and 5 is 'Very Good Effect', how would you rate the impact of visitors on the following: (SHOWCARD 3)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Impact</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>DK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local residents quality of life</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choice of Place to Eat and Drink</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range of attractions and leisure facilities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shops that meet your needs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public transport provision</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Availability of parking</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traffic levels</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Condition of the natural environment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Condition of historic buildings and monuments</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Litter</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Character of the local area</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q10 How would you rate the importance of tourism to the District in terms of the contribution to the local economy? (SHOWCARD 4)

Not important at all ........................................ 1
Not so important .......................................... 2
Neither unimportant or important .................... 3
Important ..................................................... 4
Very important ............................................. 5
Don't know/no opinion ................................... 6

Q11 Now thinking about how much visitors spend in your area, to what extent do the following types of local businesses benefit from tourism? For each type, please choose between 'A LOT', 'A LITTLE' or 'NOT AT ALL' (SHOWCARD 2)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shops</th>
<th>A LOT</th>
<th>A LITTLE</th>
<th>NOT AT ALL</th>
<th>DON'T KNOW</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Places to eat &amp; drink</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport providers &amp; services (e.g. taxis, garages)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attractions / entertainment venues</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q12 In your opinion, are there too few, the right amount or too many visitors in the Maldon District?

Too few .................................................. 1
The right amount ...................................... 2
Too many ................................................ 3

Q13 On the whole, do you think visitors are good for the area or bad for the area?

Good for the area ....................................... 1
Bad for the area ........................................ 2
Don't know ............................................... 3

On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is 'Strongly Disagree' and 5 is 'Strongly Agree', to what extent do you agree with the following statements: (SHOWCARD 5)

Q14 "Visitors make the Maldon District more lively and fun"

1 2 3 4 5 DK

Q15 "Tourism is important to the social, cultural and economic well-being of local people and businesses"

1 2 3 4 5 DK

Q16 "I am satisfied with the overall local impact of tourism"

1 2 3 4 5 DK

Finally, I have a few brief questions about you.

Q17 Including yourself, how many people in your household are male and female, and which of these age groups do they fall into? (SHOWCARD 6 - WRITE IN NUMBERS)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MALE</th>
<th>FEMALE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-24</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-34</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>35-44</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>45-54</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55-64</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q18 Which age group do you personally fall into? (SHOWCARD 6 - TICK ONE)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MALE</th>
<th>FEMALE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-15</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>16-24</td>
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<td>25-34</td>
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<td>35-44</td>
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<td>45-54</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>55-64</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q19 What is your postcode?


Q20 Could I have your name and home telephone number? I should emphasise that this will be treated in the strictest confidence and will only be used for the purpose of back-checking the questionnaire and entering you into the free prize draw.

Name

Contact Number

Q21 Finally, do you have any other comments?


THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME

Interviewer Initials

Date
Maldon Local Business Survey

East of England Tourism have been commissioned by Maldon District Council to carry out a study into tourism in the Maldon District, in particular the impact on local businesses. We therefore ask that you will take a few minutes to complete this questionnaire. To thank you for your time you will be entered into a prize draw for £50 of vouchers. For further information about EET and for terms and conditions of the prize draw please go to www.eet.org.uk/researchprojects.

Your responses are very important to us, and all information will be treated in the strictest confidence, and only used for this research project. Individual responses will only be seen by the research team.

About the Maldon District
We would like to ask your opinion about the Maldon District as a place to visit for leisure, either for a staying visit or a day trip. This will help us understand the appeal of the area to visitors.

Q1 In your opinion, to what extent do the following features currently attract visitors to the Maldon District? *For each feature please choose between 'A LOT', 'A LITTLE' or 'NOT AT ALL'*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>A LOT</th>
<th>A LITTLE</th>
<th>NOT AT ALL</th>
<th>DON'T KNOW</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Places to eat &amp; drink</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Countryside and wildlife</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Locally produced food &amp; drink</td>
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<td>Friendly people</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gardens and parks</td>
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<tr>
<td>Coast &amp; Beaches</td>
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<td>Museums, galleries and theatres</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attractive buildings, architecture</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visitor Attractions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Events</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q2a Are there any other features which attract visitors to the Maldon District?
Yes………□ Go to Q2b   No……… □ Go to Q3

Q2b Please tell us, what are those other features which attract visitors?

If you run out of space for your comments in this box or any others in the questionnaire then please turn to the final blank page, indicate the question number and continue your comments.

Impact of Visitors on Local Businesses

Q5 Now thinking about how much visitors spend in your area, to what extent do the following types of local businesses benefit from tourism? *For each type, please choose between 'A LOT', 'A LITTLE' or 'NOT AT ALL'*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>A LOT</th>
<th>A LITTLE</th>
<th>NOT AT ALL</th>
<th>DON'T KNOW</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shops</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Places to eat &amp; drink</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport providers &amp; services (e.g. taxis, garages)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attractions / entertainment venues</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Impact of Visitors on Your Business

Q6 Are you able to estimate the percentage of your turnover that results from visitors to the district? By visitors we mean people who live outside the district who come to the Maldon District for leisure or business purposes, whether for a staying visit or a day visit.

Yes………□ Go to Q6a   No……… □ Go to Q7

Q6a What percentage of your turnover would you estimate results from visitors to the district?
Q7 How would you rate the importance of leisure visitors in terms of their contribution to your business turnover and to the local economy? By leisure visitors we mean people who live outside the district who come to the Maldon District either for the day or for a staying visit for leisure purposes. TICK ONE FROM EACH COLUMN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To Your Business</th>
<th>To the District</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not important at all</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not so important</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither unimportant or important</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Important</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very important</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q8 How would you rate the importance of visitors to business events and conferences in terms of their contribution your business turnover and to the local economy? TICK ONE FROM EACH COLUMN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To Your Business</th>
<th>To the District</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not important at all</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not so important</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither unimportant or important</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Important</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very important</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q9 How would you rate the importance of visitors to local events in terms of their contribution your business turnover and to the local economy? TICK ONE FROM EACH COLUMN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To Your Business</th>
<th>To the District</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not important at all</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not so important</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither unimportant or important</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Important</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very important</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q10 How effective do you think local events are at bringing leisure visitors to the district?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very effective</th>
<th>Fairly Ineffective</th>
<th>Fairly Ineffective</th>
<th>Very Ineffective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q11 What type of local events programme would you prefer in the Maldon District?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A small number of larger events that attract visitors in their own right OR</th>
<th>A much wider spread of small scale events that contribute to the economy on a regular basis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q12 What do you think the main aim of the local events programme should be?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To enhance the number of visitors in the tourism season OR</th>
<th>To attract visitors during the ‘shoulder’ months</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Target Visitors

Although certain markets provide the opportunity for quick-wins in terms of revenue generation, for sustainable growth and profitability it is important to focus on achieving a balanced visitor profile. The proposed marketing plan for the Maldon District aims to target a type of visitor that is often described as ‘the discerning visitor’, by which we mean someone from an independent market who is a high spender and who is seeking new experiences and interested in the local culture and local produce.

Q13 In your opinion, what impact would an increase in ‘discerning visitors’ have on the performance of your business?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very Detrimental</th>
<th>Detrimental</th>
<th>Neither detrimental or beneficial</th>
<th>Beneficial</th>
<th>Very Beneficial</th>
<th>Don’t Know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q14 Do you have any other comments on the type of visitors to attract to the Maldon District?

Priorities for Growth

Q15 With the ‘discerning visitor’ in mind, what do you think are the major barriers and issues that need to be addressed for tourism in the Maldon District to grow?
Q16 What tourism facilities or infrastructure do you think is missing in the Maldon District?

Q17a Which, if any, of the following requires improvement in the Maldon District? *TICK ALL THAT APPLY*
- Cleanliness of the environment ................................................. 01
- Feeling of Safety ........................................................................ 02
- Choice of places to eat & drink .................................................. 03
- Range of attractions and leisure facilities ................................... 04
- Public transport provision ......................................................... 05
- Availability of parking .................................................................. 06
- Traffic levels ............................................................................... 07
- Condition of natural environment .............................................. 08
- Signage ....................................................................................... 09
- Shopping environment ............................................................... 10

Q17b In your opinion, which one aspect most requires improvement?

Business Support and Partnerships

Q18 Which of the following activities should the District Council prioritise in order to increase the value of tourism to the local economy? *Please select the three most important activities*
- Contact with local providers ..................................................... 1
- Delivery of advice about promoting to visitors ............................ 2
- Local management of Tourist Information Centre ...................... 3
- Monitoring the performance of the industry in the District .......... 4
- Co-ordination with business groups ........................................... 5
- Local events planning and co-ordination .................................... 6
- Marketing campaigns to promote the district ............................... 7

Q19 If there are any more suggestions or comments you’d like to make please do so here:

About You

Please could you indicate the type of organisation that you operate?
- Hotel / Bed & Breakfast .......................................................... 01
- Self catering ............................................................................. 02
- Caravan & Camping / Holiday Park ......................................... 03
- Museum / Arts venue ............................................................. 04
- Attraction ................................................................................. 05
- Conference or Events Venue .................................................... 06
- Restaurant / Café / Take Away .................................................. 07
- Pub / Bar .................................................................................... 08
- Retail ......................................................................................... 09
- Leisure / Sporting Facility or Club ............................................. 10
- Place of Worship ....................................................................... 11
- Event / Festival ......................................................................... 12
- Other ......................................................................................... 13

Please specify other

EET are conducting a number of short telephone interviews (4 to 5 minutes) with businesses within the local area. This is an opportunity to expand on your views or any concerns you may have in more detail. If you would be willing to take part please tick this box:  

We're also conducting a workshop with the local community, businesses and stakeholders on 15th July at the Five Lakes Hotel. If you would be interested in attending please tick this box:  

Would you like to be entered into the prize draw?  

If yes to any of the above, please provide your name and contact details. Your personal details will be kept confidential and will not be used for any other purposes than research.

Name

Company Name

Telephone Number

Email

Thank you for your time
Telephone Interview Questionnaire

My name is ______________ and I am working on behalf of East of England Tourism. You recently completed a questionnaire as part of a survey of businesses in the Maldon District, the aim of which was to assess how best to market the area to potential visitors. You indicated that you would be willing to take part in a telephone survey and as such I wondered whether you would have time now?

The Tourism Product
We’re keen to expand upon the answers given in the business survey and identify what it is that sets Maldon apart from other destinations.

1: What do you think the main elements of Maldon District’s tourism product are?  
*Push for landscape, cultural, heritage, attraction, accommodation elements*

2: What are the tourism products main strengths?

3: Which elements are in need of improvement?

4: If you could improve one single element of the district in the context of generating a greater income from tourism, what would it be?

5: In the context of competitive destinations, what are Maldon’s USPs?  
*Push them to find out what they think influences consumers to visit Maldon over and above other areas*

6: Is there anything else that is particularly distinctive about the district?

7: Are there any opportunities that you believe the district could or should be exploiting?

8: How do you think the district council should help businesses to exploit these opportunities?

9: Is there anything that should be considered as a threat to the district?

10: How do you think the district council should be seeking to minimise this threat/s?

Customer Types
11: What type of customers do you think the district currently attracts?

12: How does this compare to the types of visitors you attract or try to attract for your business?

13: Where are the majority of your customers from?

The Role of the Council
We’d like to ask you a some questions on the role of the district council and the way in which the district is currently promoted.

14: You’ve indicated that X, Y and Z should be the main roles for the district council with regards to Maldon’s tourism industry. Why do you say that?
15: Is there anything else you think the council should be doing to improve prospects for your business?

16: How aware are you of current district level marketing?  
*Push them for examples of marketing collateral*

17: What are your views on the way in the district is currently promoted as a tourist destination?

18: What are the best elements of current promotion?

19: What needs to be improved?

20: If the council were to consider refreshing the branding for the district, what do you think the key elements of any new brand should be?  
*If they are unsure, ask them how they would like to see the district captured within a brand - what characteristics should be conveyed.*

21: Does the district council sufficiently engage the private sector with regards to decisions about tourism marketing?

22: How could it increase this engagement?

23: The council currently organises and promotes a number of festivals in the district. What impact does this have upon your business?

24: How could this impact be improved?

25: How important do you think it is that your business is seen to be environmentally aware?

26: To what extent do you feel that the quality of the environment should be used to promote Maldon?

27: Finally, do you have any other comments to make?