

Key Bullet Points from Discussions

- How people access information and experiences is changing (e.g. virtual - App).
- What is sustainable tourism? - Appropriate tourism; bringing environment and regeneration agendas together; networking and small scale tourism; meeting the needs of local communities; individual perceptions and views about what 'sustainable' means.
- Linkages between urban and rural places (e.g. in branding, marketing - 'Central Britain' concept).
- Where does planning fit? The planning system is there for public good and that changes over time (e.g. planning system established around public health, now drive is for economic growth).
- Some visitor attractions will never be financially sustainable; they will always rely upon public support.
- Evidencing what is being delivered - (a) focus on jobs and growth as well as non-economic outputs; (b) what is the knock-on and lasting effect of a major exhibition or event in 1, 2, 3 years time? How do we replicate the success of these exhibitions/events? Legacy and measuring impact needs mapping so you can demonstrate the value and social return to funders.
- Momentum - what happens after a big exhibition or event? How can you ensure local people make repeat visits to your attraction as well as signposting tourists to it? You need to keep reinvesting in the asset so people don't lose interest.
- The visitor offer and making sure there is enough for the visitor to do - increasing overnight stays to generate more revenue; you need a critical mass of attractions to ensure visitors don't "hit and run".
- Assets need to be promoted (e.g. visitors like seeing people working on an archaeological dig then seeing the artefacts on display in the museum).
- Reliance on volunteers - (i) changing the terms of the conversation from 'what can you do for me?' to 'what can you do for us'? (ii) the pivotal role played by 'friends of' groups and the role of some Councils in facilitating this. (iii) a pool of volunteers needs coordination and management "someone needs to be in charge". (iii) You can only go so far with volunteers as sometimes specialist/technical skills are required. (iv) volunteer fatigue and how to attract younger people to volunteer. (v) You are competing for volunteers - what is your offer? Volunteers are unpaid staff and should have a job description; professional development and training, and feel part of the attraction. You need to inspire volunteers through local drives. (vi) People volunteer for different reasons such as personal interest, for enrichment, as a means of accessing paid employment.