

Best Practice 6: 'First Stop York' Tourism partnership, United Kingdom

Scale: Urban

Stage of tourism development: Mature

Main objective: Urban development/Tourism quality management

Categories of effects:

Effects on urban governance

- Cultural tourism strategy
- Sustainable partnerships
- Stakeholder participation
- Steering government
- Destination management

Effects on quality of life

- Urban economies
- Social life, local values and traditions

The city of York is one of England's most famous historic cities, with buildings and monuments of all periods of English and European History. Located at the confluence of the rivers Ouse and Foss, the city centre is surrounded by an almost complete medieval wall. The city is dominated by York Minster, the largest gothic cathedral in Northern Europe and offers a range of attractions such as the National Railway Museum and the Castle Museum that bring over 4 million visitors from all over the world each year. In the light of the importance of tourism to the York economy, the First Stop York Partnership was created in 1995 to maximise the economic and employment advantages of tourism in York to the benefits of businesses, employees, residents and visitors. This public-private sector consortium has been designed to develop tourism in York through agreement between key players in the York tourism industry. The strategy is administrated by a broadly based Partnership Group representing the city-wide nature of the partnership. Responsibility for shaping, driving and implementing action on behalf of the Partnership Group is an Executive, which includes the following urban and regional organizations: the City of York Council, the York Tourism Bureau, the Yorkshire Tourist Board, Yorkshire Forward, the York Hospitality Association, Greater York Hotel and Guest House Association, York Tourism 2000, Historic Attractions Group York and North Yorkshire Chamber of Commerce as well as the Chairs of the Marketing, Product Development and York Tourism Training working groups. All partners have agreed to the principle of collective responsibility for developing strategy and action and for addressing the issues. Since 1995, major progress has been made towards longer visitor stays, higher spending per capita, increased turnover levels and more jobs opportunities for local residents. After this progress, activities have been reviewed, and four programmes have been identified as the Strategic Framework for First Stop York for the period 1999-2002.: Understanding the Customer, The quality of what York offers, Customer-focused marketing, Strengthening the partnership. Constant monitoring of the action plan through business, visitors and residents satisfaction surveys was put in place early in the process and revealed the following trends in 2002: 43% increase in visitor spending between 1993 and 2002, 9570 jobs in York created by tourism, 14% increase in local employment between 1993 ad 2002, 77% of York visitors have been to the destination before, 93% of residents see employment and economic benefits as outweighing the problems associated with tourism. This partnership, led by the economic department of the city Council, is a very good example of sustainable tourism partnership with great impact on urban economic development.

Source: York Tourism Strategy and Action Plan, First Stop York Tourism Executive, May 2004.

Links:

www.york.gov.uk/business/tourismstrategy.pdf

[http://www.york.gov.uk/business/Tourism Trends Sep 2005.pdf](http://www.york.gov.uk/business/Tourism_Trends_Sep_2005.pdf)

<http://www.cityofyork.com/econfact/firststop.htm>

<http://www.visitork.org/>