

Potential for cultural and heritage tourism tourism essay

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Introduction

An investment in cultural and heritage tourism helps build a sense of pride of place, making any city a better place to live, a better place to locate a business, and a better place to visit but, before an investment in cultural and heritage tourism is made, the first step being taken is to conduct an assessment of the city's potential for that specific tourism. This report seeks to evaluate Lincoln's assets in attractions and visitors services areas and identify city's potential for cultural and heritage tourism. It starts by identifying the resources available in the city, followed by a prioritisation of those sources. Furthermore this report will look at other essential services needed in the city in order to develop heritage tourism (accommodation, restaurants, transports, visitor's information centres). A swot analysis will be provided and some recommendations will be outlined. For the purposes of this report, heritage tourism is the act of 'traveling to experience the places and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past and present. It includes historic, cultural and natural resources' (culturalheritagetourism. org, 2011).

Assessment of Cultural and Heritage Resources

The foundation of heritage tourism consists of heritage attractions (Timothy, 2003). Attractions provide the core elements for the development of the tourism product of a destination (Swarbrooke 1995). Heritage attractions can be divided into various broad categories. The broadest way of classifying heritage resources is whether they occurred naturally or were human made (Timothy, 2011). In Lincoln only parks and open spaces can fall into that

category examples include: Arboretum, Birchwood Nature Park, Commons land, Hartsholme Country Park, Witham Valley, Country Park, Whisby Nature Park where sports and other recreational activities can be undertaken which can be related or to heritage tourism. Churches, cathedral, castles, galleries fall into human made category. Lincoln has a vast list of ‘ human made’ attractions according to lincoln. gov. uk (2012) the city has 418 Listed Buildings, comprising 551 separate structures, ranging in date from the Roman period through to the 1950s, including churches, private and commercial properties, statues, parish boundary stones and telephone boxes’, in these assets lies some of the potential for heritage tourism. However, heritage tourists encompasses more than visiting places, from the definition visitors are looking for authentic experiences where they can feel and participate in a range of activities which been done for long time in a certain place. The table below provides a comprehensive list of the heritage sources in the city of Lincoln.

Heritage assets in Lincoln

Religious attractions

Lincoln Cathedral of St. MarySt Katherine’s Heritage and Cultural

CentreChurch of St. Mary Magdalene

Archaeological sites/historic buildings

Lincoln CastleLincoln Medieval Bishops’ PalaceLeigh-Pemberton House

(Visitor Information Centre)Jew’s HouseJew’s CourtLincolnshire Road

Transport MuseumMuseum of Lincolnshire lifeThe Collection and Usher

GallerySam Scorer GalleryGuildhall and StonebowJudges

LodgingsLincolnshire ArchivesLincoln Central LibrarySociety For Lincolnshire
History and ArchaeologyEllis MillStately Homes & Gardens of LincolnLincoln
Roman RuinsPoachers Brewery

Military attractions

Royal Air Force Scampton MuseumWaddington Heritage Centre

Music

Cathedral Choir

Festivals and pageants

Christmas Market

Local Cuisine

Stuffed chine, haslet, plum bread, Lincolnshire Poacher cheese, Lincolnshire
sausages, Pork pies

Theatres

Theatre RoyalDrill HallThe Terry O'Tool TheatreBroadbent TheatreLincoln
Performing Arts CentreChapterhouse Theatre CoNew Youth Theatre

Other

Lincoln Boat Trips and Boat Hire

Prioritization of Sources

Not all the sites in city draw the same number of visitors. The Cathedral and
the Castle are the two top attractions and can be classified as flagship
attractions. An attraction is designed ' flagship' ' when its appeal is

attributed to distinct qualities, including uniqueness, location, international

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reputation, and outstanding media attention, making it a ' must-see' attraction and relatively large in size and economic impact' (Weidenfeld , 2010, p851). The cathedral is more than the ' finest gothic building in Europe'(lincolncathedral. com, 2013), ' is a regional leader in the preservation and development of traditional craft skills' Its education mission is wide ranging, encompassing a world class library, work with schools and outreach by its choirs. Through its ownership of a 1215 original Magna Carta it celebrates the concept of 'freedom under the law' around the world (Globe, 2008, p1)The castle is home to the Lincoln Magna Carta, dating back to 1215, as well as the Charter of the Forest. Visitors can experience Historical Re-enactments, Birds of Prey Flying Displays, Tastes of Lincoln Sausage Festival and Lincoln Christmas Market (visitlincoln. com, 2013)Upon arrival to the city tourists can learn from visiting museums. There are several museums in Lincoln, the two top ones are The Collection which holds a collection of artefacts from the Stone, Bronze and Iron Ages, Roman, Saxon, Viking and Medieval eras and Museum of Lincolnshire life educates people how life might have been during an earlier period of history. Exhibits illustrate commercial, domestic, agricultural, industrial and community life (visitlincoln. com, 2013)Lincoln Central Library, Lincolnshire Archives and local parks are places which may raise local interest however are not seen as tourism attractions.

Service Quality Assessment

Having a wide range of attractions is not enough to be a successful tourism destination. Service quality and other factors linked with visitors satisfaction are found to be equally if not more important (Timothy, 2003). This part of

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the report deals with aspects of service quality in the city. Most of the heritage attractions in Lincoln open from 10: 00 am to 4: 00-5: 00pm all year round and are accessible to all tourists except Stately Homes & Gardens of Lincoln which are open on daily basis from February to September and the Castle which is undergoing major refurbishing works therefore some areas are closed to visitors leaving those tourists who have paid full ticket price to see all the Castle in an unfair position (visitlincoln. com, 2013). Upon arrival and while in the city tourists experience problems with signage, there are complaints of tourists being sent in the wrong direction as well as in the castle reports found that ' Although the current exhibition is right near the main entrance of the castle, visitors complained that it was poorly signposted. This means that signage needs improvement not only immediately outside the exhibition, but also leading up to the castle entrance' (Barry et al, 2012)Several attractions aim to educate and engage visitors examples include: ' PLAY' at the Collection a space for younger visitors, The Museum of Lincolnshire Life which offer group quiz session upon museum visit and an education program linked to the National Curriculum, the Society for Lincolnshire History and Archaeology which runs courses and meetings, arranges visits and fieldwork (visitlincoln. com, 2012) or the Castle displaying ' boards of information about life in the thirteenth century. These boards provide detail about crime and punishment, feudalism and the revolt which resulted in the signing of Magna Carta followed by an interactive board game which encourages visitors, particularly children, to construct their own version of the hierarchical social order of the thirteenth century. It is possible in this part of the exhibition, to make a wax " King's seal" (Barry

et al, 2012). Exhibitions seem to appeal to a wide audience from younger groups to elderly and the element of learning seems to be successful as ‘virtually all respondents said they had learnt something about the Magna Carta in terms of issues like its links to the American constitution’ but the element of interactivity and poor lightning was suggested as element to improve (Barry et al, 2012). Lincoln city as official guided walking tour which is subject to payment of £4. Tours can only be provided in German, French and Scandinavian languages. There are maps throughout the city with a major limitation as most of them are only written in English therefore international visitors may experience problems to find their way in the city. The Castle and the Cathedral have leaflets translated in few other languages and tours in other languages are provided depending on the availability of volunteers (visitlincoln. com, 2013). The hospitality sector is an important part of the tourism industry and plays a major role in the experience of the visitor (Holloway, 2012), Lincoln Hotels & Guest House Association has over twenty-five members providing the tourists with hotels ranging from 2 stars to 5 stars, self-catering and B&Bs (taylorlincoln. co. uk, 2013).

Other Visitors Services Assessment

‘ Heritage attractions cannot exist by themselves; they require an infrastructure around them to bring tourists to them and cater to their needs while they are there ‘(Timothy, 2003). The infrastructure needed including:

Transport

Road access to Lincoln is via the A1 with intersections at Newark (A46) from the South and near Retford (A57) from the North. The city is 40 miles east of

Nottingham on the A46 and 40 miles south of the Humber Bridge on the A15. The city is only connected by Local roads no motorway connects the city to major population centres such as Sheffield, Hull or London (lincoln. ac. uk, 2013). Lincoln Central railway station has direct connection with a range of destinations including Newark-on-Trent, Grimsby, Peterborough, Nottingham, Birmingham Airport and Sheffield. From May 2010, East Coast began to operate a direct train service between London St Pancras and Lincoln Central stations departs from London at 6. 30pm arriving in Lincoln at 9. 24pm. But this service is limited to one service daily (lincoln. ac. uk, 2013). Humberside Airport Humberside is the closest airport to Lincoln; however, most flights arrive via connections from international hubs throughout Europe but mainly from Amsterdam. It is possible to find connection from East Midlands Airport, Stansted Airport and Heathrow to Lincoln either by train or coach (lincoln. ac. uk, 2013).

Places to eat

Catering services allow visitors to take a break and enjoy a meal, a drink or a snack. As Barther cited in Timothy (2003) suggests: ‘ when they tire of visual and cognitive pleasures, tourists can indulge in oral pleasures’. Lincoln has a wide range of restaurants there are present national and International chains of food suppliers (Prezzo, MacDonald’s, Pizza Express) or international cuisines such as Thai, Greek, French, Chinese. For tourist Interested in Local cuisine there are several restaurants serving local food including, Wig and Mitre, Jews House and Electric the tree restaurants are part of Michelin travel guide (viamichelin. co. uk, 2013),

Car Parking

Personal car or rental according to Timothy (2011) seems to be popular within heritage tourists as it gives the higher degree of flexibility and mobility of all types of transportation this enables tourists to explore a series of sites, rather than one site or two. However, with them tourists bring problems as well; pollution and congestion are among these problems. Four major problems which the city is facing as it can be conclude from the table below include: the number of parking spaces available, price, disable parking and only two coaches parking areas (Jacobs U. K. , 2005).

Source: Jacobs U. K. , 2005.

Toilets

According to Lincoln City council there are 8 toilets spread out in the city centre which some of them have disable access and babies change facilities (lincoln. gov. uk, 2013)

Shopping

Shopping can be seen as one of the most important activities that tourists undertake while travelling. Lincoln Cathedral Quarter, Lincoln Bailgate and Steep Hill offer and abundance of specialist retail, art, craft and gift shops, jewellery and books.

SWOT Analysis

Strengths

Holds one of the only 4 exemplars of the Magna Carta and Cathedral
Romanesque and Gothic Style, Roman, Lindum Colonia buildings and
architecture Beautiful scenery Inexpensive art and antiques stores

Weaknesses

No visitor information centre in the bottom of the hill Limited opening hours
for existing businesses Only one train direct train service daily Lack of
nightlife Poor signage to tourists Limited facilities for tourist number such as
ATMS, currency exchange toilets Limited tourist services such as walking
tours Inefficient public transport

Opportunities

The 800th anniversary of the Magna Carta 2015 University students - VFR

Threats

Increasing cost of travel due to the increasing price of petrol Long travel time
required to the city from major population centres Other cities competing for
the same type of tourism / International competition Changes in education -
younger generation maybe loose the interest as consequence of less time
spent studying history in schools National and Local Government - funds can
be cut or shifted to other heritage sites National Lottery - funds can be cut or
shifted to other heritage sites

Recommendations

The number of coaches parking spaces in the city should be increased

Tour guides in foreigner languages, if not possible or too expensive to employ new staff, the Cathedral and Castle should invest in audio.

New visitors information centre in the bottom of the hill, welcoming and providing tourists with information needed maps, leaflets.

Signage improvements

Recur to the use of technology such as QR codes, or phone application where is possible

increase in interactivity