

Bournemouth as a seaside tourist destination tourism essay



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The town of Bournemouth was established only 200 years ago by “ a man named Tregonwell” in 1810 (Lambert, 2003). He was attracted by the natural beauty of the area and thus the first house with cottages was built (Lambert, 2003). In the UK the demand of trips to the seaside increased among the rich and middle classes by the end of the 18th century (Lambert, 2003). Hence, in 1836 the son of the first settlor “ Sir George Tapps-Gervis decides to create a seaside resort at Bournemouth” (Lambert, 2003). Consequently, in 1837-38 the first villas available for hire as well as the “ Bath Hotel” were constructed in order to accommodate Bournemouth first visitors. In the year of 1840 Bournemouth was accessible for the first time by the “ stagecoach from Christchurch to London” (Lambert, 2003). Additionally, in the 1840s Bournemouth gains recognition as a health resort due to its fresh air, “ moderate climate” and sea bathing (Walker, 2007). Bournemouth population grow to 695 by the year of 1851, the same year when “ the Church of St Peters [was] consecrated” (Lambert, 2003). In 1861 the town ´s first pier was built and the first paddle steamer started operating as a holiday exercise (Walker, 2007). Bournemouth became even more accessible by the year 1870 due to expansion of the railway network to the town. Therefore, Bournemouth received visitors mainly “ from London, the west country, the midlands and the north” (Walker, 2007). As a result the population of Bournemouth increased to 16, 859 by the year of 1881 (Lambert, 2003). More and more facilities were built, such as the theatre Royal in 1882 and the Boscombe Pier in 1889 (Lambert, 2003). In 1893 Britain ´s first municipal orchestra was launched which gave concerts for the public in the Winter Gardens and on Bournemouth Pier (Walker, 2007). The population increased rapidly from 37, 000 in 1891 to 59, 000 in 1901

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(Lambert, 2003). In the same time one and two week family vacations to seaside destinations became increasingly popular and Bournemouth expanded “ from Victorian times onwards” due to the built of several large hotels, “ former detached villas became upmarket boarding houses and later hotels” and “ artisan housing became B&Bs” (Walker, 2007). Later in 1922 the Russell-Cotes Art Gallery and Museum was opened, followed by the Pavilion in 1929 (Lambert, 2003). Due to the Second World War an airport was built by Bournemouth 1941 and the first charter holiday flight took off for Palma in Majorca with 36 passengers in October 1958 (Bournemouth Airport, 2010). A new trend towards holidays abroad developed in the 1970s due to the introduction of affordable flights which led to fewer and shorter trips by visitors (Walker, 2007). As a result of that Bournemouth attracted mainly niche markets, such as “ bowls, bridge, dancing, golf, etc.” themed holidays (Walker, 2007). In order to attract new markets a vast number of English language schools were established in the 1950’s and in 1984 Bournemouth International Centre opened for conferences and exhibitions (Walker, 2007). By the 1990s Bournemouth visitor trends have changed significant as a result of an increased number of licenses for “ nightclubs and bars in central Bournemouth” which attracted each weekend “ thousands of young people [...] for the ‘club culture’” (Walker, 2007). Corollary, Bournemouth became a “ no go area” for previous visitors (Walker, 2007). Therefore, in 1998 the Streetwise Safety Centre opened (Lambert, 2003). Nevertheless, Bournemouth population grow to 164, 000 by 2003. In the same year the Castlepoint Shopping Centre opened (Lambert, 2003) and in 2006 Bournemouth annual tourism award was inducted (Walker, 2007).

However, in 2008 the construction of Europe’s first artificial surf reef began
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and it was opened in 2009 in order to transform the image of Bournemouth completely (Walker, 2007).

Thurot

To describe the evolution of a tourism destination such as Bournemouth theoretical models can be used. The first theoretical model used was established in 1973 by Thurot. He defined three phases which destinations have to pass through in order to develop (Pearce, 1989). In the first phase the destination is discovered by wealthy travellers and thus the first “ international class hotel” settles in the destination (Pearce, 1989: 22). In the second phase of Thurot’s destination development model “ upper middle class hotels” develop (Pearce, 1989: 22). Thus the number of tourist arrivals increases. In the third phase the destination loses its unique features and identity to new emerging destinations and therefore the number of middle class and mass tourists raised (Pearce, 1989). Nevertheless, Thurot’s model does not take in consideration a time frame. However, the development phases described are closely linked to the development and improvements in transport and therefore in affordable access to and from a destination (Pearce, 1989).

Bournemouth entered Thurots first phase in 1810 when it was discovered by Tregonwell (Lambert, 2003). In 1837-38 the first villas available for hire as well as the “ Bath Hotel” were constructed in order to accommodate Bournemouth first visitors (Lambert, 2003). During that time only rich people had the time and finance available to travel. However, later Bournemouth developed into the second phase of Thurot’s model mainly due to the fact

that Bournemouth got connected to the railway network in 1870 and therefore become easier to access for a lower price the visitors number Bournemouth received increased (Lambert, 2003). Additionally, one and two week family vacations to seaside destinations became increasingly popular in that time. Therefore the type of visitors changed. Bournemouth expanded “ from Victorian times onwards” due to the built of several large hotels and “ former detached villas became upmarket boarding houses and later hotels” (Walker, 2007). By the 1950’s Bournemouth entered the third phase of Thurot’s model due to the development of affordable flights to Mediterranean destinations which resulted in a decrease of demand for seaside towns in the UK (Leksakundilok, 2006). Therefore Bournemouth lost its original values of sea, sand and sun to the newer destinations. However due to the development of language schools, the Bournemouth International Centre and amenities Bournemouth managed to attract a large number of tourists which were mainly middle class and mass tourists.

Miossec

The second theoretical model used in this essay was published in 1976 by Miossec and is called the “ Tourism development model”. Miossec’s (1976) model describes “ the structural evolution of tourist regions through time and space” (Higham et al, 1996: 76). Additionally, it identifies the changes of the “ provision of facilities and the behaviour and attitudes not only of tourists and the host population, but also local decision-makers” within a destination (Higham et al, 1996: 76). Miossec (1976) segmented its model in four “ phases of development” (Higham et al, 1996: 76). In the first phase the region is widely unknown to travellers, isolated, there are no or only few

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tourism facilities in the destination and the attitude of the local population towards tourism is diverse (Higham et al, 1996: 76). However, in the second phase occurs an increase of tourism facilities and amenities within the region which leads to “ the development of a complex hierarchical system of resorts and transport routes” (Higham et al, 1996: 76). Additionally, the attitude of the host population towards tourism changes “ to the point where it is fully accepted” (Higham et al, 1996: 76). This could result in the development of planning controls by the local authority (Higham et al, 1996: 76). In the third and fourth phase of Miossec’s (1976) model the awareness of the region and its attractions increases among travellers. Hence, the competition between single destinations within one region increases. Therefore, single destinations could “ begin to specialise in specific activities and attractions” in order to gain competitive advantage (Higham et al, 1996: 76). Corollary, the “ character of the region” will change which could have a deterring effect on tourists (Higham et al, 1996: 76). However, Miossec’s (1976) model does not explain the reason for the development of a region into the next phase.

Bournemouth was in the first phase of Miossec’s (1976) model until 1836 when the son of the first settlor “ Sir George Tapps-Gervis decides to create a seaside resort at Bournemouth” (Lambert, 2003) which can be seen as the start of the second Phase. Before that time the region where Bournemouth is situated now was mainly heathland (Lambert, 2003). During the second phase the first tourism facilities were constructed such as villas available for hire and the Bath Hotel (Lambert, 2003). Additionally, in the year 1840 Bournemouth was accessible for the first time by the “ stagecoach from Christchurch to London” (Lambert, 2003). The development “ of transport as

a means of increasing links between resorts and between resorts and tourism generating regions" (Prideaux (2), 1999: 55) plays an important role in the development process of a region (Prideaux (2), 1999: 55). Therefore in 1870 Bournemouth became linked to the railway network (Lambert, 2003). However, Bournemouth entered the third phase when tourist became more aware of the region and thus Bournemouth. By the " 1870s and 1880s villages near Bournemouth grew rapidly" such as Boscombe, Springbourne and Westbourne (Lambert, 2003). Corollary, these single destinations within Bournemouth region developed their own tourism facilities and attractions. An example therefore is Boscombe which opened its Chine Hotel in 1874, St. Clements Church in 1873 and the pier in 1887 (Lambert, 2003). However, due to the development of cheap flights for instant to Mediterranean destinations Bournemouth and its region lost attractiveness and thus visitor numbers declined (Leksakundilok, 2006).

Butler

The third theoretical model used in this essay was created by Butler in 1980 and is called the " Tourist Area Life Cycle" (Page and Connell, 2006: 31). Butler noticed that seaside destinations experiences 6 different phases of development over time based on visitor numbers (Page and Connell, 2006: 31). A seaside destination will start off in the " Exploration" phase where the destination is first discovered by tourists and the visitor number starts to increase. Due to the growing number of visitors the destination will go over to the " Involvement", than " Development" and after to the " Consolidation" phase until it reaches " Stagnation" (Page and Connell, 2006: 31). These phases a part of a life cycle of a destination which can than go over into a "
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Rejuvenation” or “ Decline” phase. In each stage significant changes can be observed in terms of the types of visitors, local involvement, impacts, supply and many more. Furthermore, the length of a stage varies from destination to destination and is also dependent on the expectations of the local population. Additionally, the S-shaped curve described in Butler (1980) Tourist Area Life Cycle model varies in shapes for different destinations due to a difference in competition, types of amenities, policies, accessibility, stimulation and many more. There is also the possibility of an interruption of the model caused by events such as financial crises, wars, epidemics and others.

Bournemouth Exploration phase started in 1810 with the discovery of the area by Tregonwell who built the first house with cottages there (Lambert, 2003). At this point Bournemouth was virtually unknown to travellers. However, in 1836 the son of the first settlor “ Sir George Tapps-Gervis decides to create a seaside resort at Bournemouth” (Lambert, 2003). Consequently, in 1837-38 the first villas available for hire as well as the “ Bath Hotel” were constructed in order to accommodate Bournemouth first visitors. During that time only the upper class was able to go on a holiday due to a lack in accessibility, time and disposable income, “ facilities and local knowledge” (Destination Recovery Services, 2007). The main reason to travel during this period was for health reasons. Seaside destinations were considered as health resort due to its fresh air, “ moderate climate” and sea bathing opportunity (Walker, 2007). Thus in the 1840s Bournemouth gains recognition as a health resort (Walker, 2007) and is considered to be in the “ Involvement” stage. However, in 1870 Bournemouth got linked to the rail

network and allowed therefore easier access for visitors especially “ from London, the west country, the midlands and the north” (Walker, 2007). “ The coming of the railway enabled people to travel further, faster and at a relatively affordable price.” (Page and Connell, 2006: 30). Consequently, the type of visitors to the destination changed from rich and ill travellers to seaside family holiday makers. This stage can be considered as “ Development”. Additionally, in this phase more and more facilities were built, such as the theatre Royal in 1882 and the Boscombe Pier in 1889 in order to offer a positive visitor experience (Lambert, 2003). The “ Consolidation” phase in Bournemouth was characterised by mainly by the development of new visitor markets due to the change in trend of holidays abroad. Thus in the 1950’s Bournemouth’s first English language schools appeared in order to attract foreign students which was possible due to easy and affordable access through Bournemouth International Airport (Doyle, 2006). Consequently, the types of tourists in Bournemouth change from family holiday makers into low spend and mass tourists (Doyle, 2006). The visitor numbers in Bournemouth continued to decrease as well as the length of stay, thus Bournemouth was declining. The main reason therefore was the growing competition of Mediterranean destinations (Leksakundilok, 2006). In the 1970’s Bournemouth entered a phase of “ Stagnation”. In order to overcome this issue the Bournemouth International Centre opened in 1984 for conferences and exhibitions (Walker, 2007). Additionally, Bournemouth started to attract young people to the town especially at the weekends due to an increase in licenses for nightclubs, bars and restaurants (Walker, 2007). Corollary, Bournemouth became a “ no go area” for previous visitors (Walker, 2007). However, Bournemouth managed to rejuvenate in recent

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years due to large investments and the creation of all year long leisure amenities, such as the Bournemouth International Conference Bureau which was launched in 2003, indoor attractions for instant the Oceanarium and the Imax cinema and annual events (Bournemouth Borough Council, 2004). Additionally, Bournemouth invested in its seafront appearance, accommodations and transport sector. The result of that was an increase in visitor numbers from 300, 000 in 1996 to 500, 000 in 2000, tourism awards and the transformation into a metropolitan town (Bournemouth Borough Council, 2004).

Gormsen

The final theoretical model used in this essay was developed by Gormsen (1981) and is called " The spatio-temporal development of international seaside tourism". This model concentrates on " the importance of local participation and local control" (Hotelmule, 2010). Moreover, Gormsen (1981) looked at the development process of tourism in seaside destinations in Europe (Pearce, 1989). Therefore, he concluded that the development of the accommodation sector " is an initiative of external developers in the early stages" (Leksakundilok, 2006: 54). However, later the development process is replaced " by extensive participation by regional (local) and other social groups" (Leksakundilok, 2006: 54). The model starts off with the tourism development on both sides of the English Channel. However due to the development of cheaper and faster transport and advances in technology tourism spreads out to the second periphery which represents the coastline of southern Europe, the third periphery which shows the development of tourism at the north African coastline, the Balearics and <https://assignbuster.com/bournemouth-as-a-seaside-tourist-destination-tourism-essay/>

Canary Islands, and the fourth periphery symbolises destinations in west Africa, the Caribbean, the Pacific and in the Indian Ocean, South East Asia and South America.

Between the 1800's and 1870's the participation in tourism development of the local population in Bournemouth increased which is noticeable through the accommodations and facilities built to cater for travellers, for instance in 1837-38 the first villas available for hire as well as the " Bath Hotel" were constructed (Lambert, 2003) and in 1861 the town's first pier was built and the first paddle steamer started operating as a holiday exercise (Walker, 2007). During this period only the Upper class could afford to travel.

However, that changed with the development of a railway link to Bournemouth in 1870 (Lambert, 2003) which allowed an easier access and thus more people were able to travel. The development of the railway network was responsible for a change in attitudes toward travelling which corollary " changed the class structure of the English seaside holiday" (Page and Connell, 2006: 30). Over time the number of tourism accommodation, facilities and activities increased due to a growth in local involvement in the tourism development process. By the 1900's one and two week family vacations to seaside destinations became increasingly popular and Bournemouth expanded (Walker, 2007). With the development of cheaper transport and accommodation the type of tourist Bournemouth received changed from only upper class to middle class. However by the 1990s Bournemouth visitor trends have changed significant again as a result of an increased number of licenses for " nightclubs and bars in central Bournemouth" which attracted mainly the lower classes (Walker, 2007).

Conclusion

In summary, this essay showed how Bournemouth developed from a virtually unknown heathland region on the south coast of England to an award-winning seaside destination which receives hundred thousands of visitors each year. The main factors which enable the development of seaside destinations such as Bournemouth were identified as “ improved access, via rail travel, improvements in social access to leisure time and the recognition of new investment opportunities in creating these coastal resorts” (Agarwal and Shaw, 2007: 3). Furthermore, Bournemouth development was compared with four theoretical models of destination development. The first model used was described by Thurot (1973). It emphasises on three stages of development a destination has to pass through. The second model developed by Miossec in 1977 “ describes a destination’s evolution based on spatial characteristics, transport, tourist behaviour and attitudes of decision-makers, and the community” (Dredge, 1999: 778). The next model used was created by Butler in 1980 and is called the Tourist Area Life Cycle. Butler (1980) “ illustrates the various stages a destination travels through, depending on the number of tourists it attracts over time” (Ryan and Cooper, 2004). The final model used was developed by Gormsen in 1981. This model concentrates on “ the importance of local participation and local control” (Hotelmule, 2010).

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