



All-Party Parliamentary
Group on Social Tourism

Giving Britain a Break

**Inquiry into the social
and economic benefits
of social tourism**

October 2011



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Foreword



Paul Maynard MP

Chair, All-Party Parliamentary Group on Social Tourism

Twelve months ago I had never heard of “social tourism”. I suspect that there will be those who read this report who are as unaware of the concept as I was before I met the Family Holiday Association. This general lack of awareness has to make those of us who participated in this inquiry humble in our aims. We are but a starting point. We aim to build the foundations on which much will subsequently be erected. There must be recognition that raising awareness of what we are talking about, and placing it on the political agenda, are crucial objectives before we can go any further.

There is no getting away from the fact that one of the most immediate themes to emerge from our evidence is the term “social tourism” itself. It confounds people on first hearing it, as it did me. Whether the subject matter discussed in this report will still be referred to as “social tourism” in a few years is open to worthwhile debate. At this early stage we are using the terminology we have available to us, but we must not be overly concerned if this changes over time. One of the most fascinating things to come out of the inquiry was the myriad of stakeholders engaged in activities that they themselves would not describe as constituting “social tourism”. In a sense this report is about shining a spotlight on what is out there now, not about creating something new from scratch.

What attracted me to this endeavour over a year ago, in addition to the persuasiveness and vision of the Family Holiday Association, was the way in which the issue represented an overlap between social policy and tourism policy – two personal interests of mine. The breadth of the scope is reflected in the variety of stakeholders who submitted written and oral evidence. For witnesses and evidence takers, regardless of whether they were coming at the issue from a social policy or tourism perspective, everyone involved has consistently sought to ground their views in as strong an evidence base as possible. It would be naïve to not address the fact that we are living in constrained economic times, with no giant pot of money at the Government’s disposal. What this report has tried to do is put forward a range of ideas grounded in the evidence we have collected that will not necessitate vast sums of Government expenditure.

Finally I would like to take the opportunity to thank all those who made the inquiry possible, in particular my parliamentary colleagues Bob Russell, Tony Baldry and Anne Marie Morris for participating in the oral evidence sessions. It required a great deal of time, effort, organisation and cooperation from many people and organisations. This report is the result of all that hard work. Now we have to make a concerted effort to take the ideas contained within the report forward to a broader audience. After all, this is merely the beginning of a long process.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul Maynard". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style. The first name "Paul" is written in a larger, more prominent script, and "Maynard" follows in a similar but slightly smaller script. The ink is dark and the background is plain white.

The inquiry

The All-Party Parliamentary Group on Social Tourism

First formed at the end of 2010, the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Social Tourism is an informal cross party group of MPs and Lords. The purpose of the group is to investigate and promote the social and economic benefits of social tourism. All-Party Groups hold no official status within Parliament and no formal powers, instead they are an opportunity for Parliamentarians to discuss, explore and promote their shared interest in specific policy issues.

The inquiry process

The inquiry was held over a number of months in 2011. Written evidence was collected between April and May, and four oral evidence sessions were held between 8th and 15th June. The inquiry was led by Paul Maynard MP, who chaired all the oral evidence sessions. He was assisted in these by Bob Russell MP, Tony Baldry MP and Anne Marie Morris MP. John McDonald, Director of the Family Holiday Association, also attended some sessions as a special adviser.

Acknowledgements

The Group would like to thank the Family Holiday Association for its assistance in requesting and collating the evidence for this inquiry, and for organising the oral evidence sessions. Thanks are due, too, to all those individuals and organisations who submitted written and oral evidence. For a full list, see the Appendix. The written submissions and transcripts of the oral evidence can all be read online at http://appgonsocialtourism.nationbuilder.com/2011_inquiry.

Further information

Please direct any comments or queries that you may have about this report or about the Group to the Secretariat at info@familyholidayassociation.org.uk. Alternatively contact the Chairman, Paul Maynard MP, at the House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA. Further information on the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Social Tourism, including membership details, can be found on the website listed above.



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Introduction



John McDonald
Director, Family Holiday Association

The term “social tourism” is something that few people will have heard of and even fewer understand. And yet the concept is well known elsewhere, particularly in mainland Europe. Literally millions of people throughout the continent benefit from a wide variety of schemes designed to help those less able financially to enjoy the benefits of a break away from home.

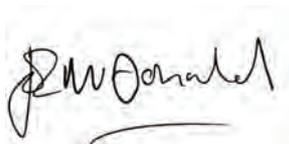
For decades in countries such as France, Spain and Belgium people have enjoyed the right to benefits that UK citizens have been mostly denied. And yet, people in Britain appear to value holidays as much as elsewhere and intuitively understand the importance of a break away from home.

Unfortunately, almost one in every three families with young children in the UK cannot afford a simple one-week holiday and more than a million families will not have even been able to afford a day out this summer.

If access to a break has been supported in this country it will have been through a multitude of small schemes, usually run by charities, supporting a particular constituency of beneficiaries. One recent survey found more than 600 organisations providing a service that could be described as social tourism. Yet most of these organisations will not have recognised that this was what they were involved in.

As long ago as 1976 a report *Holidays: the social need*, written by the Social Tourism Study Group and jointly sponsored by the English Tourist Board and the Trades Union Congress, concluded that “much more could and should be done in this country to enable everyone, whatever their social or economic status, to take a holiday”. But the findings of the report were largely ignored in the UK while, at the same time, the rest of Europe forged ahead with improving access to holidays for the most disadvantaged.

One charity, the Family Holiday Association, has been helping families access the important benefits that a simple holiday can deliver for over 36 years. As well as helping more than 2,000 families this year (2011) it has worked to improve research on the social, medical and psychological benefits of a holiday, and to widen the understanding of social tourism in the UK. The charity has helped establish a Social Tourism Consortium that includes organisations such as the Youth Hostel Association, the Family Fund and UNISON Welfare. The charity also supports the APPG on Social Tourism with secretariat services.



Executive summary

The purpose of this report is to stimulate a new debate about the future of social tourism in the UK. The report is the result of an extensive inquiry held over the summer of 2011 by the All Party Parliamentary Group on Social Tourism (the Group) with numerous interested stakeholder organisations participating.

The Group initially wrote to stakeholders asking them to submit their views and experience on the concept of social tourism. In particular, we sought evidence on how it could deliver the twofold benefits of improving health and social well-being and returning economic gains. The call for evidence had a strong response: 26 written evidence submissions were received from public, private and voluntary sector organisations from the UK and Europe. Our subsequent oral evidence sessions in the House of Commons explored this evidence in greater depth and were attended by 17 organisations.

Evidence provided to the Group has allowed us to produce this report looking at various opinions on the definition of social tourism, its practice in the UK and Europe, its social and economic benefits and what role local and national Government can play in its development. The report concludes with a set of key recommendations on the initial steps that should be taken next to establish the concept in public policy discourse. We would like to emphasise that these preliminary measures are designed to come at no cost to the public purse and represent a starting point for further investigation into social tourism.

Overall we wish to emphasise that the development of social tourism is not simply about providing free or subsidised holidays for those who cannot afford them; it is about recognising that holidays and leisure can have an important positive impact on the welfare of families and the wider economy. We hope that the Group can play a useful continuing role in the promotion of this argument.

I Defining social tourism

We learnt from stakeholders that “social tourism” is understood in a variety of ways, with no unifying definition. Many organisations focused on the need for various disadvantaged groups of people to access holidays and recreational activities. Other contributors had a broader perspective, believing that social tourism’s impact on host destinations and the tourism industry should also be recognised. The lack of a shared definition was seen as detrimental to the positive development of social tourism.

The Group also found that some stakeholders felt the name “social tourism” itself did not adequately convey its meaning and potential, and that its future development and marketing would benefit from the use of a more appropriate term.

Our recommendations (see page 28) appeal for a clear definition of social tourism, with the possibility of a different terminology to describe the concept.

II Mapping social tourism

The inquiry also looked at the extent to which social tourism is practised in the UK, but uncovered little evidence on the numbers and funds involved. The most useful estimate was provided by university research that found at least 600 organisations performing social tourism-related activities.

Several stakeholders made the case that measuring the extent and impact of social tourism would not be difficult, and existing mechanisms such as VisitEngland surveys could be adapted for the task.

Our recommendations (page 28) include the creation of an overview or map of social tourism in the UK, with key data collected by a working group representing a variety of interests.

III Social benefits

Many organisations outlined to us the social welfare benefits derived from social tourism. These included improvements in individuals' and families' physical and mental health, as well as broader educational, cultural and communal advantages for wider society. We were told that holidays had the potential to tackle social exclusion, loneliness and isolation by helping families feel that they lived more "normal" lives. Children were frequently identified as the group that would benefit most from social tourism activities. Several organisations likened its potential to early intervention policy. Positive experiences such as holidays had a profound effect on children's behaviour and educational attainment, with the potential to reduce the need for public sector intervention in later life.

Many organisations believe that social tourism should be incorporated into social welfare policy, citing its potential for a reduction in anti-social behaviour and greater integration in society.

Our recommendations (page 29) suggest building on existing research for a deeper understanding of the long-term benefits that social tourism can bring to individuals, families and society as a whole.

IV Building economic evidence

Many organisations cited the positive economic potential of social tourism. A frequent example was the need for tourist destinations to fill spare capacity in the UK's accommodation sector. Thousands of rooms are left empty in the non-summer months and the variations in sector employment often hinder business expansion and career and skill development. Social tourism can help to alleviate these problems by allowing disadvantaged groups access to holiday accommodation in the off- or shoulder season. This would bring benefits not just to the accommodation providers but also to the transport, hospitality, attractions, retail and cultural sectors.

Many stakeholders drew attention to social tourism's potential to deliver significant regeneration of tourist destinations and act as a spur for regional and local economic development, as an increase of visitors would lead to greater levels of employment and secondary spend.

Our recommendations (pages 29-30) propose a pilot study to measure the potential economic benefits of social tourism in specific areas, which could become a model that could be used in other regions.

V The role of Government and the public sector

In Europe we found clear examples of a strong government lead in implementing social tourism policies, including significant cross-party and cross-departmental support. Several contributors to the inquiry stressed the need for some form of central Government action on social tourism in the UK, but would prefer it to act as a facilitator rather than taking a coordinating role. Suggestions included tax incentives to social tourism providers and employers, introducing concessionary rail fares, gathering and making available information on social tourism, or helping to implement a policy framework within which social tourism could thrive.

We also heard considerable support for a more localised approach to the development of social tourism policies. Organisations felt that projects needed to be tailored at the destination level, and could be devised by local alliances and consortia. If their design is successful it could be extrapolated later into larger national schemes.

One stand-out issue from our investigation of the public sector was the question of school holidays, and whether children should be allowed to take breaks during term time. Some organisations expressed concerns about encouraging absence from schools, but others argued that families could simply not afford holidays during the standard tourist season.

Our recommendations (page 30) call on the Government to acknowledge the existence and potential of social tourism in all future tourism policies and strategies, and to create a committee to explore how various departments can support the concept in an integrated way. We also ask the Department of Education to explore further the issues of children taking breaks in mid-term.

VI Lessons from Europe

Stakeholders from Europe provided extensive evidence of best practice in three countries with contrasting social tourism initiatives. In Spain the government invests €125 million a year in the IMSERSO scheme, but for every €1 invested it receives €1.5 in extra tax revenue and cost savings for the Spanish health service. Up to 80,000 people enjoy employment as a result of its activities. It is one of the most powerful examples of social tourism's economic potential presented to the inquiry.

ANCV in France is a public agency that provides holiday vouchers to 3.4 million workers, subsidised in part by employers or social organisations. Vouchers can be used to pay for accommodation, meals, transport, sports and cultural activities. Every year €1.3 billion-worth of vouchers are distributed, and it is estimated that they generate €5 billion for the wider economy. Similar voucher schemes exist in Switzerland, Poland, Cyprus, Italy and Hungary.

The Flanders Tourist Board in Belgium runs a Holiday Participation Centre. This provides maintenance and construction grants to accommodation providers who agree to offer reduced rates to low-income and disadvantaged groups. The Centre helps 100,000 people a year in this way, as well as maintaining the integrity and accessibility of its accommodation infrastructure.

The European Union runs the €3-million Calypso programme that is investigating the economic and social benefits of social tourism and providing funds for innovative social tourism projects. Although 21 European countries are participating, the UK is not.

Our recommendations (page 31) urge the Government to look at the evidence of best practice in Europe and examine the conclusions that can be drawn for the UK, and to consider participating in the Calypso programme.

VII Conclusions and recommendations

The general conclusions and recommendations listed at the end of this report have been briefly presented in this summary. As a final note we emphasise that many of the steps we suggest will be long-term in their effect. An immediate recommendation would be for stakeholders to consider what could be done to draw attention to social tourism as a policy area and substantially demonstrate its potential in the short term.

In particular, we call on all social tourism stakeholders to think creatively about the opportunities offered by 2012's Diamond Jubilee and the Olympics and Paralympics.

I Defining social tourism

One of the main aims of our inquiry was to discover from stakeholders what they understood by the term “social tourism”. In our correspondence to stakeholders we offered a brief definition employed by the Family Holiday Association (FHA) to serve as a starting point for greater thought and debate. This states that social tourism is *“the inclusion of people living on a low income in holiday and leisure activities”*.

Demand side focus

Many inquiry participants, such as UNISON Welfare, readily accepted the FHA’s description. Others, such as Tourism For All, offered a slightly different perspective: *“Social tourism [is] tourism which is to some degree subsidised by the taxpayer or charitable/voluntary effort in order to achieve a social benefit.”*

Most organisations were in broad agreement over the purposes of social tourism: to help disadvantaged people gain access to holiday or leisure time. Different organisations laid emphasis on different groups of people that they thought should benefit from social tourism initiatives – the elderly (Grandparents Association), children (the Sailors Families Society), low income groups (the British Hospitality Association), the disabled (Family Fund), carers (Canvas Holidays) and so on. Overall, evidence from stakeholders indicated that any definition of social tourism would need to encompass all the perspectives of the various organisations involved in its development, and accurately reflect the scope of social tourism-related initiatives across the UK.

Stressing this point, some organisations called for a definition to cover other causes of social exclusion beyond low income, including age, health or disability. Others argued that social tourism should simply be about helping *everyone* enjoy holidays and leisure time.

VisitEngland referred to the underlying moral impulse beneath social tourism by quoting the Universal Declaration on Human Rights that states “each individual has the right to rest and leisure time”. Outside of the UK, the International Social Tourism Organisation (ISTO) offers a broader definition of social tourism:

“The connections and phenomena related to the participation of people in the countries of destinations as well as of holidaymakers, of disadvantaged layers of society or those unable to participate in tourism, holidays and their advantages.”

Broader focus

While these variations on the definition of social tourism focus on the demand side of the concept, i.e. holidaymakers or visitors, some organisations emphasised that the social tourism equation should equally acknowledge the importance of the supply side, the host destinations and the tourism industry in general.

Professor Maitland and Drs Miller and Minnaert from the Universities of Westminster and Surrey, leading researchers in social tourism, recognise this duality in their working definition: *“tourism with an added moral value, of which the primary aim is to benefit either the host or the visitor in the tourism exchange”*. Elsewhere, the South West Tourism Alliance and Welcome to Yorkshire also made the case for focusing on the supply side participants, arguing that social tourism should be used to deliver employment and growth to disadvantaged or rural areas.

In their evidence VisitEngland took a three-dimensional approach to defining social tourism: providing holidays to those who don’t normally have access to them, utilising spare capacity in the

tourism sector, and exploring the social benefits and positive role that leisure holidays have on society.

The three-level approach is also supported by the Family Holiday Association. Thea Joldersma, the FHA's policy and programme manager, described a "win-win-win" scenario where families, referring agents and the tourism industry all benefit from social tourism projects. Such approaches also help acknowledge the general economic benefits of social tourism alongside the improvements it delivers in welfare. This issue is covered further in Chapters 3 and 4 of this report.

Lack of shared definition

Although numerous organisations share similar or connecting views over the definition of social tourism, our evidence from stakeholders also revealed that overall it is only vaguely understood, and its scope and potential are little recognised. It became clear that the term social tourism means different things to different people in a wide range of situations. We note with interest that the responses to this inquiry from the Department of Culture, Media and Sport and the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment in Northern Ireland did not provide any official definition of social tourism.

Dr Scott McCabe, Associate Professor of Tourism Management/Marketing at Nottingham University Business School, highlighted the problem of "the semantics of social tourism":

"In research conducted in 2009, we surveyed 650 charities working in a variety of ways to provide breaks for people with difficult circumstances. It is clear from this research that many providers of breaks for carers, and respite for sufferers from cancer and other illnesses, essentially provide some similar services to those delivered by the Family Holiday Association, alongside other types of support – however, they do not recognise what they do as part of social tourism. The problem here is not that the emphasis is different, only that there is a disconnect in terms of the recognition of expertise in this particular field, which affects opportunities for cost savings or efficiencies to be made by those organisations."

These sentiments were echoed by several organisations who, until contacted by this inquiry, were unaware their work came under the umbrella of social tourism. Sam Littlechilds of the Youth Hostel Association explained:

"For more than 80 years we have tried to give people the opportunity to get involved in social tourism – even though perhaps we did not know that we were. If the new parlance is social tourism, we have done it successfully."

Scott McCabe further emphasised to us the need for all stakeholders in social tourism to have a full understanding of the concept:

"Particularly challenging is the fact that people in the tourism industry, as well as people working indirectly in the field of social tourism (social workers, faith organisations, health care professionals etc), do not understand what social tourism is. Many do not know what the term social tourism stands for and how it can be linked to sustainability, corporate social responsibility (CSR) agendas, and the wellbeing of society as well as individuals. Similarly, many organisations working in the voluntary sector to support disadvantaged groups are getting involved informally in the delivery of social tourism activities or are funding such activities... I believe there is a critical need to raise the profile of social tourism among the voluntary sector, the tourism industry and the wider public."

McCabe's position is further supported in the statutes of the International Social Tourism Organisation (ISTO), which recognise that participation in social tourism is *"made possible or facilitated by a combination of policies, clear social measures and the commitment of social players"*.

The Universities of Surrey and Westminster offered a useful conclusion:

"By having a single, organised approach to social tourism, the term could be better understood as it would stand for one thing. In this way, awareness would be raised and not diluted. Work could begin on creating a positive image of social tourism, without the risk that this message would be confused by other organisations using the term differently. It would also be much easier to gather consistent information on the extent and scope of social tourism."

Evidence from Europe

Evidence from stakeholders in Europe revealed social tourism policies that understand the concept in terms of universal accessibility and state-led implementation. IMSERSO (Instituto de Mayores y Servicios Sociales) in Spain sees state subsidy provided for elderly people to enjoy breaks on the Spanish coast. The ANCV (Agence Nationale pour les Chèques-Vacances) scheme in France supplies discounted holiday vouchers for workers across the country. Representatives from these schemes gave evidence that, while there was no clear legal impetus or substantial definition of social tourism in their countries, the right to and benefits of holidays were expressed as something deeply culturally rooted. The schemes are also accompanied by strong economic rationale. (For more detail on these and other European schemes see Chapter 6).

Philip Evans, Head of Insight at VisitEngland, remarked on the distinction between northern and southern Europeans and their approaches to holidays:

"I think it goes back to the tradition of religion in Europe. The Catholic religion has many saints' days and it is no coincidence that the number of holidays in southern European countries is higher. People expect – it is almost a right – to have a holiday, to have a break. Then we have the Protestant work ethic in northern Europe which is focused more on longer working hours and shorter holidays, and in many northern and western European countries of not taking full holiday entitlement, which has almost become a norm. I think there is a clear divide between those two things."

We do not believe this implies that social tourism is a completely alien concept in the UK and northern Europe. The Tourist Board in Flanders, Belgium has been delivering social tourism policies since 2003. Social tourism there is enshrined in law. Policy makers are committed to *"making holidays possible for literally everyone"* through eliminating *"as many impediments and barriers as possible."* So schemes exist to provide financial support for social tourism infrastructure as well as information facilities for tourists and social welfare agencies.

In the UK we are informed that there is no absence of activity related to social tourism. As noted above, Scott McCabe has identified at least 650 organisations doing related work. James Berresford, Chief Executive of VisitEngland, believes that social tourism has been *"part of the DNA"* of English tourism for years; it has just not been labelled as such.

Re-branding the term

Alongside the need for a clear definition, we acknowledge the doubts that exist on whether the term “social tourism” itself is appropriate for further promotion of the concept. It was first mentioned by the Family Holiday Association that the term is “*not the most attractive*” and that the idea should perhaps be made more accessible for stakeholders and the public. Other witnesses agreed, citing the need for clarity to avoid stigmatisation of the concept and of those who benefit from it. Steve Weaver, Chief Executive of Blackpool Council, explained to the inquiry:

“I think the advantage of the heading ‘social tourism’ is that it allows a focus to take place that has not taken place in this country before. But there is a danger of stigma, and I think that is sometimes shown with the resident population. For them, Blackpool has become a place where people have been brought in who they saw as not deserving, for whatever reason. I am not saying that is the case, but I am saying it could be perceived like that.”

This issue of “branding” was further highlighted by the Youth Hostel Association and by Karen White from Delce Junior School. She argued that stigmatisation around social tourism could be avoided by sensible marketing. James Beresford of VisitEngland also observed:

“I think there is a certain stigma attached to the term ‘social tourism’. I think the last thing we want to do is to label people and make them feel unworthy because they have to have assistance to go on holiday. That is not a good idea.”

Recommendations

Overall, the evidence made it clear that there is no culturally established and Government-supported understanding of social tourism in the UK. We believe that there is an important need for a clear definition and understanding of the term, and that all the current practitioners in social tourism would benefit from a unifying definition to help promote and organise their work to greater effect.

Alongside the need to define the concept accurately, we also accept that the term “social tourism” may not be the best name with which to promote the idea. Consequently we urge all interested stakeholders to explore the use of a new terminology with which to describe and promote social tourism.

II Mapping social tourism

Having explored the definition of social tourism in the UK, another important aim of the APPG was to understand the current scope and range of social tourism activities that currently exist. As a direct reflection, perhaps, of the lack of clarity around a universal definition, there appears to be no comprehensive picture of the full extent of social tourism activities across the country.

Absence of information

The only substantial evidence of the scale of these activities in the UK comes from research done by the Nottingham Business School in June 2009, which identified more than 600 organisations involved in social tourism.

Many organisations contributing to this inquiry admitted that they were unaware of social tourism and had not realised that their work could be classified under such a concept. Karen White, head teacher of Delce Junior School, Rochester, whose pupils benefit from the services of the Family Holiday Association, highlighted the lack of a “go to” network or resource that provides a listing of social tourism initiatives.

Academics from the Universities of Surrey and Westminster explained that this situation was the result of the small-scale and fragmentary nature of social tourism activities in the UK. They called on the Government to act as a repository of knowledge and information on social tourism. They drew attention to the fact that in Europe (France, Belgium, Italy, Spain, Portugal) social tourism is part of public policy, with schemes often being on a large scale and receiving substantial subsidy.

In the UK Government support for social tourism is limited to its involvement with the Family Fund charity: £35 million of funding is provided to help up to 56,000 families a year cope with life caring for a disabled or seriously ill child. Around £14.5 million is spent on providing holidays and outings.

Evidence from various organisations called for remedies to this situation. The Association of British Travel Agents (ABTA) suggested that knowledge of social tourism needs to be improved and there should be greater understanding of what the industry does. Barnado’s also argued for a raised profile for the concept and more marketing for existing activities. East of England Tourism wanted to see some measurement of the current impact of social tourism initiatives in the UK and an analysis of future opportunities. The sense of potential and opportunity was echoed by the South West Tourism Alliance, who claimed there was a very poor knowledge of social tourism among potential participants and suppliers, and that there needs to be liaison between different sectors to raise awareness.

Evidence from Europe

In Europe social tourism mapping projects already exist. The Flanders Tourist Board supplies information and publishes brochures of holiday offers available for social welfare purposes. In France social tourism organisations are partially united by an association-cum-lobby group called the Union Nationale des Associations de Tourisme (UNAT). In their evidence IMSERSO from Spain underlined that gathering evidence and information was key to the success of social tourism schemes.

Need for further research

Building a relationship between social tourism participants and suppliers was a theme taken up by other organisations. Bournemouth Borough Council made the case for a brokerage service for social tourism stakeholders, allowing the easy matching of holiday availability to social tourism needs. Welcome to Yorkshire suggested that a social tourism measure could be included within VisitEngland's national surveys.

We welcome VisitEngland's offer to undertake additional research and measurement of social tourism, but recognise their suggestion that this would probably require extra funding. Tourism For All explained to the inquiry its past attempts to secure funding alongside the English Tourism Council to create a "Holiday Bank" database. They also explained:

"Tourism For All is currently developing OpenBritain, an 'open source platform' of accessible tourism that includes hotels, restaurants, shops, attractions and other facilities, to assist visitors with mobility, hearing or visual needs. We would be open to including on this signposting to specific projects, charities or other facilities if the data could be gathered at some point in the future."

Scott McCabe provided useful detail on the current status of social tourism research (for more information see Chapter 3). In particular, he highlighted the creation of a Knowledge Transfer Partnership between Nottingham University Business School and the Family Holiday Association, and the appointment of a Social Tourism Research Associate (Sarah Johnson) who is helping to create a knowledge bank on social tourism to be made available on the FHA's website.

We welcome the efforts of Tourism For All and the Nottingham University Business School, and the positive position of VisitEngland, with regard to gathering, mapping or listing social tourism information. But we recognise that those efforts described both in the UK and Europe seem to focus largely on the supply side of the social tourism equation, detailing holiday offers for social welfare organisations to purchase rather than covering those charities, social services and other organisations who aim to provide holidays or breaks to individuals and families.

Recommendations

We note with concern that there is no comprehensive understanding of the size and spread of social tourism activities. In order to fully understand its scale and potential, we suggest creating an overview or map of the status of social tourism in the UK. This could collect key data on:

- **The number of organisations that currently have social tourism-related activities**
- **What these activities entail**
- **Who these organisations are serving**
- **Where they are operating**
- **The size of the funds involved in their activities**

In order to help initiate this research we suggest the creation of a coordinating working group made up of the Department of Culture, Media and Sport, the Family Holiday Association, VisitEngland, local authorities (including local education boards) and local tourist boards. This group will help steer other recommendations we have outlined elsewhere in this report.

We believe that conducting this research will come at a minimal cost and could be supported by the Family Holiday Association.

III Social benefits

The social welfare benefits derived from social tourism initiatives were universally acknowledged by all the stakeholders who took part in the inquiry. A wide range of physical, psychological, educational, emotional, cultural, communal and other benefits were noted in inquiry responses. We believe that greater exploration and evidence of such benefits is needed to demonstrate the large and important social welfare contribution that social tourism initiatives could make.

Individuals and families

Local council and tourism authorities in Blackpool, Bournemouth, the South West and the East of England all mentioned the dual physical and mental health benefits delivered by social tourism. Charities echoed this position. Age UK and the Grandparents Association cited the potential for holidays to tackle social exclusion, loneliness and isolation, and to allow families to feel like “normal” members of society.

Barnado’s referred to its own research report *Below the Breadline*, which highlights how holidays, short breaks and days out for leisure activities are very important to low-income families and children. The Family Fund and the Family Holiday Association both argued that holidays made for stronger, healthier and happier families. The Sailors Families Society shared these beliefs, explaining how access to breaks improved family bonding and self-esteem and gave children opportunities to make new friends and develop educationally.

Evidence from Delce Junior School in Rochester and Safer Places, a domestic abuse victim support charity, provided positive support for social tourism initiatives. Delce’s head teacher Karen White stated:

“[I have seen] huge benefits for the children in my school who have had [social tourism] opportunities, and we are able to track them in terms of behaviour incidents, the engagement of children in school, reduced exclusions, increased pupil progress, better pupil learning, engagement of families in learning within the school as a family and the engagement of parents in parenting courses.”

Both Karen White and Anne-Marie Sweetland of SaferPlaces highlighted that lack of confidence was a significant barrier to access for many families who could be enjoying holidays. Action through social tourism policies brought significant improvements to the confidence levels of the parents and children with whom they worked.

Raising confidence was also a benefit noted by the Family Fund and the Grandparents Association who saw “fantastic” improvements in families’ self-confidence as well as children’s behaviour at school and overall educational attainment. Indeed, the positive impact on children was a key benefit identified by contributing organisations. Jenifer Littman of Tourism For All likened action through social tourism to early intervention policy. Both were about generating experiences for children that will have a positive formative influence on them in later life and possibly prevent the need for social support.

Community and public services

We found that the impact on wider society and on the provision of welfare policies such as education and health was recognised by numerous tourism organisations. VisitEngland argued that the potential for social tourism benefits to have a relieving impact on the work of the NHS should be explored. East of England Tourism also suggested that benefits derived from social tourism could lead to less public sector intervention for troubled families and individuals, and that the concept should be incorporated into welfare policy. The Youth Hostel Association made the case for social tourism initiatives helping young people to develop enterprising behaviour skills and improve their life chances. Welcome to Yorkshire argued that the opportunity to enjoy new experiences and cultures are important to family life.

The Tourism Alliance pointed to the broader community benefits brought through social tourism experiences – raised feelings of social capital, an improved outlook, greater cultural awareness and knowledge and a reduction in anti-social behaviour. The South West Tourism Alliance saw opportunities to improve sustainable and environmentally friendly tourism through social tourism. Tourism For All supported these views, arguing that benefits included a greater appreciation of cultural heritage and the natural environment and the promotion of equal opportunities. The equality aspect was echoed by Canvas Holidays, who pointed out that holidays are being increasingly seen as a necessity rather than a luxury.

Research

Academic research on social tourism's benefits has been published by the Universities of Surrey and Westminster. Their findings broadly cover the range of benefits listed by all stakeholders:

“Individual benefits: social tourism led to increase in self-esteem, expansion of social networks, skills development and improvements in mental health.

Family benefits: closer family ties, changing parenting styles, adaptation to new family structures.

Societal benefits: as a result, participation in social tourism can lead to participation in education and paid work, and to more pro-active and positive attitudes towards other forms of social intervention, such as marriage counselling and encouragement to attend school.”

The Flanders Tourist Board cited this research in their own evidence, adding that if individuals are helped through improving their confidence, social networks, practical skills and outlook, they can in turn participate and contribute to society. This holistic perspective is shared by the International Social Tourism Organisation (ISTO) who argues that social tourism is a “shaper of society”. Although many stakeholders are in agreement about the social welfare benefits of social tourism, we recognise that there is a lack of extensive research on the subject. The South West Tourism Alliance noted that it was currently very difficult to measure the social welfare outcomes of social tourism projects. Andy Jasper from the Eden Project called for:

“Applied research, basically good case studies which show hard numbers, measuring the real volume and value, but also sensitive enough to show what the real benefits are to families as much as to industry and the area that the people are coming to.”

VisitEngland observed that the existing research on social tourism was largely academic. We believe Scott McCabe of Nottingham University Business School made the strongest case for more research in this area:

“There are no real centres of dedicated social science research in tourism in the UK. There are very few places for the industry or government to turn to for high-quality travel and tourism-related research. There is small-scale research in the health field, geography and development studies, sociology departments and many research centres within management schools, as befits a broad interdisciplinary field of studies like tourism. However, social tourism does not feature at all in the higher education curriculum in tourism in the UK.”

He further called for:

“...a cooperative, interdisciplinary research centre to act as a hub for knowledge development in tourism and the wider visitor economy. Funded through a tripartite system of the industry, research councils and university, the aim of such a centre would be to develop a better understanding of the impacts of tourism on the economy and society.”

Dr McCabe described the work initiated by the Knowledge Transfer Partnership between the Family Holiday Association and Nottingham University. This includes research into measuring the wellbeing benefits of social tourism and projects looking at the impact of holidays on self-efficacy beliefs, families suffering from domestic violence and educational performance. Dr McCabe believed that such steps should be used to “pump-prime larger and longer-scale focused research”.

In other evidence we found that the Universities of Surrey and Westminster supported his position:

“What is needed is a commitment to longitudinal studies about the social and economic outcomes of social tourism. This kind of research would demonstrate the value over time that comes to individuals, families, businesses and society from social tourism, and would do so in quantitative and qualitative terms. More established forms of social welfare policy have longer histories of assessing the benefits of the policy. Social tourism must produce similar evidence if it is to be accepted as a valid form of social policy.”

Recommendations

In light of the evidence supplied to the inquiry, we welcome the current ongoing research into the social benefits of social tourism and would encourage further investigation into the long-term welfare benefits of the concept. We recommend:

- **Constructing a longitudinal study (repeated observations of the same variables over long periods of time) comparing the impact of taking holidays as opposed to no holidays among individuals and families of similar socio-economic status**
- **Assessing the long-term benefits for physical and mental health, employment, school attainment etc**
- **Building on research already established by leading academics in the social tourism field.**

IV Building economic evidence

Most of the participants in our inquiry viewed the economic benefits relating to social tourism as an area of huge potential. The Tourism Alliance noted that the UK tourism industry is one of the largest in the world. It provides employment for over 2 million people, is worth over £115 billion and has been identified by the Government as one of five key sectors that are best placed to rebuild and rebalance the UK economy. Yet the industry is under pressure from the gradual decline in domestic tourism and the regular constraints of the low- and high-season dynamic. If social tourism initiatives in the UK could ultimately mirror the success of schemes in neighbouring Europe, it could deliver up to £5 billion to the tourism sector.

Spare capacity in the off-season

Many tourism sector organisations mentioned in their evidence that the issue of seasonality is a perennial barrier to the growth of the tourism market in the UK. Blackpool Council, Bournemouth Borough Council, the British Hospitality Association, East of England Tourism, VisitEngland and many others recognised that there was huge potential for destinations to exploit social tourism to fill the spare capacity of accommodation experienced in the off or shoulder season. Andy Jasper from the Eden Project explained the problems for the typical tourist destination:

“The traditional model for tourist attractions would be to close immediately after the October half-term and open just before the Easter holiday period, and that causes huge social problems in itself. If you took a snapshot of unemployment in Cornwall in the mid-1990s, in the winter you would get about 12% unemployment and in the summer, with exactly the same population, you would get about 2%. That is entirely due to the dependence on the tourism economy.”

The British Hospitality Association highlighted that in the UK 39% of holiday nights away are taken in the third quarter of the year, with 26% in the second quarter, and just 17-18% in each of the two other quarters. Steve Weaver, Chief Executive of Blackpool Council, suggested how social tourism could help to ease the problem:

“We have got 58,000 beds [available] in Blackpool, and spare capacity is a significant issue. Our low season is not just outside July and August, the main holiday period, it has been increasingly during the week. Even in the high summer season there are issues of spare accommodation on weekdays. Some of our smaller hotels and guest houses have found it not commercially viable, and have been converted into private rented houses, with multiple occupation, which creates all sorts of other problems. If there is a potential for filling our empty beds [through social tourism], with the infrastructure that already exists, that would be a great benefit for the town.”

The Tourism Alliance, Tourism For All and the Universities of Surrey and Westminster all agreed that filling spare capacity would benefit more than just the accommodation sector, extending to transport, attractions, natural environment, hospitality, retail and cultural industries. East of England Tourism suggested that social tourism could be a positive catalyst for the redevelopment of existing holiday destinations, as well as the creation of new ones. And ISTO highlighted social tourism’s potential to foster sustainable regional and local development by bringing fresh resources to new areas.

However, ABTA warned against overly targeting certain areas with social tourism policies. They argued that social tourism should not create geographical or seasonal sinks, that particular destinations or periods of travel should not be marked out for social tourism, and that it should fit seamlessly into the mainstream industry. The South West Tourism Alliance expressed a similar view, stating that social tourism policies should not be treated separately from current tourism business plans. They also noted that many small businesses with low turnovers will be limited in what subsidies they can offer for social tourism purposes, and that some of them limit their activities seasonally to avoid VAT costs. They added that social tourism policies must not negatively affect destinations that benefit from low usage in the off-season such as natural and historic environments.

Employment, secondary spend and tax

We noted with interest that employment and secondary spend were issues highlighted by VisitEngland as being the most pertinent to the Government's ambitions for the development of tourism in the UK. The Universities of Surrey and Westminster cite the extension of labour contracts through lengthening the tourist season as an important benefit of social tourism. The South West Tourism Alliance and the Tourism Alliance explained how the seasonality of the tourist season was leading to a shortfall in trained employees and limiting the prospects of career development in the sector. Kurt Janson of the Tourism Alliance explained the reach of secondary spend:

"The benefit extends beyond the boundaries of the park, the hotel or whatever accommodation it is, into the wider community, into the services and facilities, a lot of which are very marginal at the moment. For example, post offices and pubs in rural seaside areas are the types of outside businesses that would benefit from it and make them more viable and, therefore, the communities as a whole in these areas more viable."

Supporting this statement was evidence from the Youth Hostel Association that it has been successful in securing new sites for developing a hostel through the business models it produces. These demonstrate how budget accommodation can benefit a community more than luxury developments. The South West Tourism Alliance agreed that social tourism would not benefit the luxury sector, but also pointed out that there were questions surrounding the secondary spend capacity of social tourists.

Some organisations raised the issue of VAT in their evidence, but it was not widely discussed in the course of the inquiry. The British Hospitality Association noted that the UK has the second highest rate of VAT in the European Union and called for it to be reduced for the tourism sector. The South West Tourism Alliance also believed the Government should consider looking at this issue. But we acknowledge that the Government has this issue on its radar. In a recent response to a Commons question, the Treasury Minister David Gauke MP indicated that the Government would "look at" proposals to reduce the rate of VAT for the tourism industry. We will monitor any developments with interest.

Relief for public sector intervention and early intervention

The most frequently cited economic benefits of social tourism were the indirect and long-term relief it could provide for public sector intervention. Tourism For All argued that social tourism could lead to extensive savings to the taxpayer resulting from measures that would keep children out of care or the justice system, halt family breakdown and improve mental and physical health. Beyond this, it believed that helping individuals through social welfare interventions, like social tourism, would help such individuals contribute to society economically.

The Grandparents Association supported this position, stating that by keeping families together and out of the care system the Government would save £40,000 per child. East of England Tourism and VisitEngland also noted the potential to ease the burden on public sector welfare spending. We highlight here that this evidence points to similarities in the benefits of early intervention policy – saving the Government money in the long term by giving young children positive experiences at the start of their lives. Jenifer Littman of Tourism For All identified social tourism policies as a form of early intervention. She commented:

“I think I would point out that we spend huge amounts of money on families that fail when a small bit of support at the right moment could save us all that money. Very often people do get labelled without ever really being helped. You can end up voluntarily putting your children into care because you cannot cope for a little while expecting to have them back and then find that you have been labelled a bad mother and you have to go through that process, whereas a little bit of help earlier on in that process and maybe the opportunity to work with another little group, to feel supported, to be given broader horizons and be part of a little community that emerges out of an experience that keeps offering support into the future, that could save huge amounts of money. I would say it is not about rewarding failure, it is about preventing failure.”

Karen White from Delce Junior School in Rochester also noted the economic impact of social tourism on early intervention policies and the potential they have to help the whole family unit:

“For instance, we have got some children going on holidays at the end of term and those are directly linked to parents attending a 12-week parenting course, so it is having a positive impact on upskilling parents and building better relationships with parents. Now, for some of those families, that will mean that potentially there will not be so much Social Services intervention, they will not necessarily be down the doctors getting the antidepressants, the children will be happier, the children will take up less time in my school, so you can attach pennies and pounds to the positives of these sorts of projects.”

European evidence

Numerous organisations, from VisitEngland to the Family Holiday Association, drew attention to evidence from social tourism schemes in Europe. We believe that these presented the strongest case for potential economic success of social tourism in the UK.

The Instituto de Mayores y Servicios Sociales (IMSERSO) scheme in Spain was most often cited as an example of the economic potentials of social tourism. IMSERSO provides senior citizens with heavily discounted breaks in the off-season. The organisation commissioned an extensive piece of research by Price Waterhouse Coopers, which revealed that for every €1 subsidy that the Spanish Government put into the scheme, the Spanish Treasury receives €1.5 in extra cost savings (for example in unemployment benefit) and tax revenue (for example VAT, tax on wages and social security contributions). The report observed that this figure had been reached before even considering the potential positive impact the scheme had on the Spanish healthcare system by mobilising 1.2 million pensioners. IMSERSO’s evidence highlighted that the scheme’s success was founded on its important social benefits and its profitability. It also revealed that up to 80,000 people in Spain enjoy employment as a result of the scheme, including those working in transport, accommodation, travel agencies and healthcare.

In France, L’Agence Nationale pour les Chèques-Vacances (ANCV) provides discounted holiday vouchers for company employees across the country. These vouchers are currently supplied to 3.4 million employees, which equates to 7.5 million users when family members are included. In 2010,

vouchers worth €1.3 billion were distributed. They are accepted in 170,000 outlets in France. In his evidence Phillips Kaspi, Director General of ANCV, made clear that the French tourist industry has readily accepted the importance of the vouchers to the tourism economy and signed up to the scheme without even being asked. He estimated that the €1.3 billion of vouchers would have a wider economic impact of €5 billion.

The Flanders Tourist Board was another frequently cited example of a successful social tourism scheme. Through its Holiday Participation Centre it provides information, accreditation, infrastructure support and advice about accessible tourism in the region. In 2010 they helped 97,000 people through the participation centre. €600,000 a year is invested in improving accessibility infrastructure for accommodation, with 600 hotels participating in the scheme. €200,000 is spent in producing a brochure of reduced holiday tariffs for the social welfare sector. Flanders explained that their efforts were delivering economic benefits through filling spare accommodation capacity and extending the tourist season.

Further research

The Calypso programme currently being run by the European Commission is largely centred on the economic benefits of social tourism. It hopes to explore and develop best practices mechanism with which to improve the tourist low season in EU member states. The Commission has invested €3.5 million in the programme and is currently working through its second call for proposals. This type of research was a theme taken up by other contributors to the inquiry, who saw the need for a strong economic case to support social tourism policies as crucial for the engagement of various stakeholders. Blackpool Council argued that pilot or pathfinder projects should be created to explore economic models. Bournemouth County Council proposed a brokerage system to facilitate social tourism partnerships between tourists and providers. Other organisations made the case for looking at key markets and changing demographics. Age UK, for example, said:

“While holidays are important to older people, older people are also important to the industry. The older consumer market is large and it is growing. European projections show that the 65-plus market is forecast to grow by 42% from 2010 to 2030, while the 15-65 market will fall by 4%. A tourism industry that is responsive to the needs of an ageing population will benefit. Research by Age UK Enterprises found that among older people who travelled, the average number of trips was 2.4, the average trip length was 9 days, and the average yearly spend was £1,167. Older people are also more likely to be in a position to travel off-season and mid-week”

ABTA also argued that opportunities should be created for traditionally excluded demographic groups, but warned against creating too many new administrative costs for the industry. VisitEngland believed that existing academic research on social tourism did not focus enough on its economic benefits. They believed there should be more private sector thinking involved in exploring the subject. This was echoed by Barnado’s, who noted the potential of incorporating the concept into corporate social responsibility schemes.

The South West Tourism Alliance argued for an in-depth look at the market and prospective users of social tourism, and was enthusiastic about supporting pilot programmes. Tourism For All made the case for using seed-corn funded, evaluation-assisted and locally promoted projects to deliver the best economic results. The charity’s CEO explained:

“I believe projects need to stay relatively small. The funding should be organised in the way of the government’s ‘Big Society’ agenda, where it is seen as investment that ultimately saves taxpayers’ money. A way needs to be developed for the small projects to be able to

demonstrate their value to the overall economic picture. Bigger organisations could then help spread this approach, through local government, larger charities, and perhaps some form of caretaker group composed of existing stakeholders.”

Scott McCabe argued that “good economic research is needed to investigate the costs and benefits of a national policy for holiday savings.” The Universities of Westminster and Surrey called for a new business model to be created to incorporate social tourism:

“Through demonstrating the social welfare benefits to individuals and the economic benefits to the UK tourism industry and tourism-dependent destinations, social tourism is an ideal candidate for social enterprise development. This radically different business model would allow social tourism organisations to utilise social welfare budgets instead of being dependent on charitable donations. This use of the welfare budget would have benefits not just for the recipient of the support, but unlike other forms of welfare support, social tourism will ensure benefits to the destination in which the support is provided.”

In advance of any implementation of social tourism business models, it is worth mentioning VisitEngland’s call for a supply and demand survey of the social tourism industry. They believed that our inquiry should be a first step in bringing the social tourism proposition to wider stakeholders such as the UK’s Destination Management Forum.

Recommendations

The evidence submitted from European stakeholders drew attention to their research into the economic impact of their particular social tourism schemes in terms of improving employment, increasing tax revenues and other benefits.

As a result we believe there is a strong need for robust, thorough and practical evidence that makes the economic case for the benefits of social tourism in the UK. We feel that existing academic research around social tourism has largely concentrated on its social impact and needs to move away from this sole focus to embrace the economic arguments.

We propose that Government, industry and other stakeholders come together to set up a pilot economic study scheme. We suggest that this study should:

- **Take place in two geographically separate areas that represent key UK tourism markets (e.g. the North West coast and Cornwall)**
- **Measure the level of spare tourist accommodation/facilities at different times of the year**
- **Examine what impact filling this spare capacity will have on the local economy, in particular employment and additional spending levels**
- **Explore how filling such spare capacity could be achieved.**

We suggest that the working group of stakeholders proposed in Chapter 2 – the Department of Culture, Media and Sport, the Family Holiday Association, VisitEngland, local authorities (including local education boards) and local tourist boards – should take the lead on helping to design and implement a pilot study.

The long-term ambition of this pilot scheme would be to provide detailed and substantial evidence of the economic benefits of social tourism, as well as a robust, workable and transferable economic model that could be used to promote future social tourism studies/programmes in other regions.

V The role of Government and the public sector

Social tourism has the potential to impact on several areas of public policy. We believe that establishing a proper role for Government will be crucial to its success. Evidence from Europe revealed strong Government support for social tourism initiatives, leading to substantial achievements. But these programmes are long-established, while social tourism in the UK is yet to be formally acknowledged. The organisations that gave evidence to the inquiry had differing opinions regarding the Government's role, notably concerning the choice between national and local action. We also noted that the question of children taking breaks outside of school holidays was frequently raised over the course of the inquiry.

Evidence from Europe

IMSERSO in Spain receives over €125 million a year from central Government funds for a nationally delivered scheme. The Flanders Tourist Board invests up to €3.5 million annually to advance accessible tourism infrastructure in the region according to a political decree. ANCV in France actually receives no public subsidy but instead makes €20 million profit a year. It does, however, act as a Government agency, with an officially appointed management.

On a supranational level, ISTO believes that a Governmental role is fundamental for the successful promotion of social tourism. At its last conference in 2010, its members called for public authority support for the concept. The European Commission argues that there should also be a European body capable of coordinating supranational activity on social tourism.

In their evidence IMSERSO argued that the combination of social welfare policy integration, subsidies and guidance was a very successful model for implementing social tourism objectives. They explained that the programme is developed and signed off by a number of Government departments including the Ministry of Economy and Finance, the Ministry of Health, Social Policy and Equality, the Ministry of Industry, Tourism and Trade and the Ministry of Labour and Immigration.

The collaborative approach was also revealed in evidence from the Flanders Tourist Board. Luc Gobin, Head of Tourism For All, explained how social tourism policies have cross-party support including the Socialists, Christian Democrats and the New Flemish Alliance. In Belgium the right to a holiday is non-controversially seen as "almost a human right". Mr Gobin argued that the UK could copy the Belgian model of social tourism policy. Government could use legislation to support policy and make up the shortfall of interest from the commercial sector to help broaden knowledge, awareness and support.

National implementation

Our inquiry found that some UK organisations who favoured central government action on social tourism would prefer to see it acting as a facilitator rather than taking a coordinating lead. The Universities of Westminster and Surrey suggested that Government support would give impetus to coordinated efforts from academic, industry and social policy experts. They also suggested that Government should play a role as an acquirer of knowledge and a repository of information. Welcome to Yorkshire, East of England Tourism and the Family Holiday Association all made the case for Government introducing a social tourism framework from which to develop and market the concept. VisitEngland also supported the possibility of creating a social tourism framework with their organisation being delegated responsibility by the DCMS. The Sailors Families Society called for Government intervention through a scheme similar to Home Access (successful in providing

computers to British households). The Tourism Alliance favoured the introduction of a national voucher scheme, similar to the French programme, which could be rolled out nationally. They argued that allocating tourist development funds to large one-off projects had not been successful in promoting regeneration and that a business-generating voucher scheme would be more productive. The Tourism Alliance insisted that any scheme should take note of European evidence, and should be developed through a cross-Whitehall approach.

Other organisations recognised the need for Government intervention but from a hands-off position. Canvas Holidays suggested this could be through providing financial incentives and support for charities and the businesses that work with charities, rather than designing and implementing the social tourism scheme itself. ABTA viewed the Government as crucial to overcoming barriers to access, such as rolling out broadband internet. Blackpool Council and Barnado's proposed incentives through tax breaks for companies or individuals that provide social tourism facilities, or tax incentives for employers who help low-paid employees save for a holiday. The Northern Ireland Tourist Board provided evidence of these types of policies by detailing the concessionary travel fares it offers to certain age groups.

Local implementation

Alongside support for central Government action on social tourism policies, several organisations were in favour of local authority delivery. Age UK felt that, while a national commitment to the concept was needed, locally delivered programmes bring the most success. Similarly Welcome to Yorkshire called for a social tourism framework to be developed centrally, but envisaged it being tailored at destination level according to local needs.

Tourism For All, as described in previous chapters, favoured a reverse approach, allowing for the development of small-scale, locally developed projects that could eventually be extrapolated into larger national schemes. The South West Tourism Alliance called for a cross-departmental approach at the local level, envisaging coordination between tourism and the social and education services. They argued for the creation of local alliances and consortia to promote the concept and develop creative thinking.

Tourism For All thought that the current political climate was not right for the creation of a new Government agency or quango, but that a caretaker group of organisations involving VisitEngland and the Family Holiday Association should help guide a new approach. We welcomed VisitEngland's willingness to take a proactive role in the development of social tourism policies. They believe that the participation of stakeholders from a local to national level is needed for a cross-cutting approach.

In terms of funding, the Family Fund expressed concern that the £800 million allocated over four years to providing short breaks and respite care had not been ring-fenced by local authorities. They argued that the Family Fund could help provide a template on how to most productively spend this money. The Grandparents Association also believed the distributing of available funds should be moved away from the statutory sector towards the voluntary sector:

"A lot of the people who would benefit most will not go near the statutory sector, and this is speaking as someone who used to work for Social Services. I would also say that when politicians of any ilk have to make a list of priorities, it does not matter how much we argue and how much we dress it up, they will see social tourism as holidays and still something of a luxury rather than a necessary item. If people are really keen on doing it, then that money should be given and ring-fenced but given to the voluntary sector rather than the statutory."

UNISON Welfare warned against too great a level of Government intervention on implementing social tourism practices. They felt that stakeholders should be encouraged to build on the models developed and explored by voluntary and third sector organisations such as the Family Holiday Association.

Marketing was an issue raised in evidence by Blackpool Council and the South West Tourism Alliance. The latter argued that Local Government should stay away from the “hard face” of marketing at a local level and concentrate its efforts on facilitating special projects and schemes. Blackpool Council drew attention to the creation of an arm’s length management body in their region which was delegated responsibility for tourism promotion.

We acknowledge that the creation of Destination Management Organisations (DMOs) is a significant part of the Government’s tourism strategy. The aim is to reform local tourism bodies into organisations that look beyond marketing and “act as the voice of the visitor”, taking into account all aspects of a destination’s presentation in the public realm. DMOs are intended to enable tailored tourism offers that respond to the visitor economy and that are free of national or local political influence. VisitEngland explained that securing the support of these bodies would be important for the future of social tourism in the UK.

School holidays

An issue that deserves particular analysis is the relationship between school holidays and social tourism measures. School holidays dictate the peak periods of the tourism industry, meaning that holiday prices are often too high for many families to afford. Social tourism can provide discounted breaks for families in the off-season, but this requires children to leave school during term time. Organisations such as Canvas Holidays, the Tourism Alliance and the South West Tourism Alliance recognised that allowing flexibility around school holidays would provide economic benefits to the tourism industry through an extended season. The Family Fund and the Grandparents Association highlighted the potential social benefits involved, such as reducing stress levels for families travelling with disabled children or improving a child’s classroom behaviour. The Youth Hostel Association argued that schools should be encouraged to embed residential breaks away from home into the curriculum. They cited research on the benefits of their summer camps programme as evidence of the potential of such trips.

But some organisations were wary of changing school holiday structures. Barnado’s raised concerns that social tourism policies would mean that children, many already with low attendance, would miss too much school. ABTA pointed out that school holidays are a perennial challenge for the tourism industry but said that parents should not be encouraged to take children out of school during term time.

Karen White from Delce Junior School in Rochester explained to the inquiry that by law children are allowed 10 days off from school across a school year before parents start getting fined. She argued that the Department of Education could be persuaded to introduce a special mark for registers that acknowledges that a child is taking a special break from school. She explained how social tourism-enabled breaks could be combined with educational attainment:

“One of the things we have done for the children who go on the holidays we have set up is that we expect a project when they get back and we provide the parents with the materials for that... Now, as a head teacher, if that were provided to me at the end of the week when they came back, I would feel that good learning had happened and we would consider that to be an educational week offsite. It is no different from having an outward bound trip which is fully authorised, where we are allowed to say that the child is being educated offsite... One

week's absence for a child is within the statutory approved limits and, to be honest, if that gets the families more engaged in school and more engaged with us, those families are often poor attendees anyway so I see that those sorts of links would probably increase attendance rather than decrease it."

The Government position on social tourism

Social tourism has never received official recognition or been extensively integrated into British tourism policy. The current Government's contribution to the inquiry was made by John Penrose MP, Minister for Tourism and Heritage. He stated:

"The Government is not in the position to fund or subsidise holidays and, equally, previous Governments of all parties have not found any money to do so either. While we recognise the economic and social importance of holidays, we think it is up to families how they spend their time and money, so we are committed to help disadvantaged people and to combat poverty through other policies and programmes. Equally, outright subsidies would prove unpopular with taxpayers who are having to tighten their purse-strings, and there would also be the practical issue of determining eligibility and thresholds."

The previous Government took a similar line. In response to a question put by Baroness Rendell in February 2010, the then Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at DEFRA, Lord Davies of Oldham, stated:

"France, Spain and Italy have integrated social tourism into their social welfare policy, providing holidays for people on low income. We have taken a rather different view on the question of improving life for the less well-off in our society... We prefer to ensure that increased resources are available for families to make their choices. We are conscious of the fact that France, in particular, puts a very great emphasis on holidays, even regarding them as a human right... the concept behind it is that family holidays should be supported and provided for. I indicate how sympathetic the Government are to that concept, without having an excessive contribution of public funds towards it."

We recognise, as do stakeholders who contributed to this inquiry, that the prevailing economic climate and current policy direction places limits on the Government's potential investment in new social tourism policies. But we believe that this does not preclude progress for the concept and note that elsewhere in his evidence Mr Penrose stated that he would "carefully" consider any "alternative approaches" that did not add extra burdens to public finances.

VisitEngland acknowledged that it does not imagine Government funding being made available at present, and argued that the case for the benefits of social tourism must be made to the private sector. They also highlighted the current move away from regionalism with the abolition of the Regional Development Agencies and the growth of localism supported by Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) and DMOs. They suggested that these new bodies should be involved in the development of social tourism policies.

Recommendations

We believe greater acknowledgement from the Government is needed as a first step in moving the concept of social tourism into mainstream policy considerations. We regret that the Government missed an opportunity to include social tourism in its recently published tourism strategy, and call on all future strategies and messages to acknowledge its existence and potential.

It is clear from the evidence supplied to the inquiry that social tourism touches on numerous areas of policy and that its success as a concept will rely on collaborative efforts. Consequently we call on the Government departments to create a cross-Whitehall committee on social tourism to explore how best their remits and activities can benefit from and support the concept, and ensure an integrated approach is adopted.

As a result of the evidence provided to the inquiry we would urge the Department of Education to recognise and explore the potential benefits that breaks during term time can have on children's educational attainment.

We would also welcome an investigation into the potential usage of a child's permitted 10 days off school a year. This could look at:

- **How many families currently use these days for taking a holiday**
- **The economic impact these holidays have**
- **How mid-term holidays could be coordinated by schools**
- **How holidays could be combined with educational schemes and projects**
- **How mid-term holidays could be promoted (for example we propose exploring the potential of a voucher system).**

VI Lessons from Europe

We have outlined in previous chapters how social tourism policies are well advanced on the continent. As a concept social tourism is very familiar and well understood in other European nations. These schemes help millions of individuals each year and, additionally, produce significant economic returns. We discuss them in detail here, including the current Calypso programme run by the European Union, in the hope that an analysis of their best practice can contribute to social tourism developments in the UK.

IMSERSO

The Instituto de Mayores y Servicios Sociales (IMSERSO) in Spain has been running a Holiday Programme for the elderly since 1985. It was originally created to help combat the loneliness experienced by the elderly during the Christmas period, by sending them to stay in hotels. It has since expanded to the current programme that today sends 1.2 million elderly people to enjoy reduced-rate holidays during the low season from October to June. It has a budget of over €125 million.

IMSERSO outlines its objectives as promoting “active aging” and preventing situations of dependence, improving elderly people’s quality of life, boosting social integration and preventing loneliness, boosting the economic activities of various sectors and supporting the creation and maintenance of employment in the tourism sector during low season.

Beneficiaries of the programme are people over 65. They have the possibility of enjoying holidays in coastal areas, cultural tours or nature tourism trips for anything between five and 15 days. Participants in the scheme are selected by IMSERSO according to criteria that evaluate applicants’ ages, their income and whether they have used the scheme before. IMSERSO cover around 30% of the costs of holidays, covering travel, board, healthcare, insurance and leisure activities. More than 300 hotels participate, and around 9,300 travel agencies. The benefits of IMSERSO holidays also extend to transport businesses and insurance companies. As outlined earlier, a Price Waterhouse Coopers report in May 2004 highlighted the considerable economic benefits the IMSERSO programme is producing, showing that for every 1€ invested in the programme, the Spanish government generated an additional 1.5€ in tax revenue.

The IMSERSO programme was cited by several organisations such as the Family Holiday Association and VisitEngland as a powerful example of the economic potential of social tourism schemes.

ANCV

The Agence National pour les Chèques-Vacances (ANCV) is a public agency in France that makes holiday vouchers available to the working population, regardless of position or income. It was founded in 1982. Under the scheme employees can regularly save a percentage of their income with which to purchase vouchers. Savings are tax-exempt and supplemented by employers or social organisations. Only employees in companies of 40 people or more are currently eligible for the scheme but the agency is exploring expanding the scheme to smaller businesses. Vouchers are purchased by work councils within these companies. Although all employees can claim vouchers, they are distributed according to income and size of family. On average, for each €100-worth of vouchers, a manager in a company will contribute €80 and receive €20, whereas an employee on the lowest salary will contribute €20 and receive €80 subsidy.

In 2010, vouchers worth €1.3 billion were issued to 3.4 million workers generating an estimated €5 billion for the wider economy. The vouchers come in denominations of €10 and €20 and are valid for two years from the date of issue. They are accepted in 170,000 outlets across France and can be used to pay for accommodation, meals, transport, sports and cultural activities. ANCV charges a fee for the distribution and repayment of vouchers, which enables it to turn an annual profit of €20 million and not rely on any government subsidy.

ANCV profit is collected in the Bourse Solidarité Vacances (BSV), a fund used to provide holidays for those on low incomes. Holiday packages are provided at discounted rates of between 70% and 80% by various French tourism industry partners. The BSV also operates closely with a network of 300 local bodies, associations and social welfare groups who assist it in identifying those families in need of discounted holidays. Other ANCV programmes include 'Seniors on Holiday' and 'Financial Aid for Upgrading Accommodation in the Social Tourism Sector'.

Similar voucher systems also exist in Switzerland, Poland, Cyprus, Italy and Hungary.

Flanders Tourist Board

The Holiday Participation Centre, a service of Tourism Flanders & Brussels, was founded in May 2001. Its express purpose is to provide holiday assistance to families and individuals living in poverty. The centre liaises between the public, private and social sectors.

In 2003 the Flemish government issued the Tourism For All decree. This allows for local accommodation providers who offer reduced tariffs for low-income groups to apply for certain maintenance and construction grants. The Holiday Participation Centre then shares the reduced tariffs with the social welfare sector and the holidaymakers via their website and annual brochures. The scheme aims to help several target groups: persons living in poverty, the disabled, children and young people, families and senior citizens. The Holiday Participation also provides certification labels for hotel accommodation and youth hostels rating the level of their accessibility.

The Centre helps around 100,000 people a year to access a holiday, €600,000 is invested annually in improving accessible accommodation infrastructure and €200,000 is spent on publishing its brochure. Some 600 hotels work with the centre, and around 950 social welfare organisations. Several organisations participating in the inquiry called for a similar mechanism to the one established by the Flanders Tourist Board, allowing for the spare capacity of the tourist sector to be filled, at reduced rates, by those in need as selected by the social welfare sector.

The European Union

We note with interest that in 2006 a European Economic and Social Committee report described social tourism as a “miracle” for its numerous benefits:

“We can dub social tourism a ‘miracle’ in that all the practitioners and users obtain all kinds of benefits: economic, social, health, employment, European citizenship... no one is harmed by this activity... the bottom line is that it would be difficult to find a human economic activity that is so universally recognised and supported.”

Since the signing of the Lisbon Treaty the European Commission has begun to take a greater interest in tourism. In 2008 the European Parliament ratified a €3 million preparatory programme called Calypso that is looking at the social and economic benefits of social tourism. So far 21 countries have signed up to the programme but the UK has yet to indicate its interest.

Calypso seeks to support four target groups: the elderly (aged over 65), young people (aged 18-30), disabled adults and families. The scheme has attempted to catalogue existing best practices of social tourism in Europe, to examine current difficulties and propose solutions, and to identify mechanisms with which to facilitate tourism in the low season across Europe. It believes that its objectives will help to generate economic activity and growth in the EU, improve tourism seasonality, increase employment in the tourism sector and develop European citizenship.

In 2010 Calypso issued a Call for Proposals with the objective of “*supporting tourism-related public authorities to be able to undertake trans-national low season exchanges in the Calypso target groups.*” The four winning projects, covering eight countries (Italy, France, Spain, Portugal, Poland, Finland, Czech Republic and Malta), were launched in March 2011. These are the 'Able-Access For All Exchange Project', 'European Senior Travellers', 'Social Tourism in Wellness and Leisure activities' and 'Una Rete di Social Turismo'. Calypso's second Call for Proposals was issued in April 2011 and has a budget of €450,000 to finance projects.

The European Commission also intends to work towards the creation of a web-based Demand-Support platform as a means to facilitate tourism exchange. A separate Call for Proposals on this was issued in August 2011.

In their evidence to the inquiry the Family Holiday Association supported the partnerships established through their participation with Calypso, describing it as an important forum in which to share knowledge and expertise. They also pointed out that the UK's participation would not cost the Government anything.

We also note, however, IMSERSO's evidence that they are contributing their experience to the Calypso programme but have not received any substantial benefits. ANCV described their initial enthusiasm for the Calypso agenda but were frustrated by the difficulties in finding common ground on the definition of social tourism and who it should target. Philippe Kaspi, ANCV's Director General, noted the split between economic and social targets. He argued that if the programme could attract the participation of more of the larger EU member states it would represent a more interesting proposition. VisitEngland expressed some reservations about participation in Calypso, believing the UK is “off-kilter” with many of the European positions. They did, however, concede that the situation would need to be looked at further.

We note that the Government does not appear totally opposed to considering participation in the Calypso scheme. In a Westminster Hall debate on the regeneration of seaside towns on 8 December 2010, John Penrose MP commented on the UK's position with regard to Calypso:

“A number of Members... mentioned social tourism. That is a particularly interesting idea that I discussed recently with Mr Tajani [European Commissioner for Industry and Entrepreneurship] from the EU. There is an EU-wide programme called Calypso under way at the moment. It is an interesting notion that we need to explore carefully. Members will be aware that there is a very limited pot of public funding... and we need to come up with solutions that are not going to add to the burden on the taxpayer. If there are proposals coming out of the new all-party parliamentary group that is being set up, I will be interested to hear them. We are also engaging with the European effort via Mr Tajani.”

Recommendations

We greatly welcome evidence from stakeholders in Europe and acknowledge the examples of best practice supplied by them. We ask the Government to look at these practices and to explore what lessons can be drawn.

We also believe that evidence of best practice in Europe should be explored by the steering group leading the economic pilot studies outlined above.

In the long term we would encourage the creation of a mechanism (e.g. a brochure or website) that easily matches the demands of a customer (e.g. families or social services) with the needs of the suppliers (e.g. the tourism industry) at a national level.

We would like to see the Government participating in the European Commission's Calypso programme on social tourism. While we recognise the programme is not without its limitations, participation will not cost the UK any funds, will give it ready access to an important forum for exploring best tourism practice and will be a symbolic gesture indicating the Government recognises the concept of social tourism.

VII Conclusions and recommendations

Through this inquiry we have attempted to take a comprehensive look at the level of understanding and practice of social tourism in the UK and Europe, to measure its potential social and economic benefits and to make some constructive recommendations on how to further the development of the concept in this country. We recognise that social tourism policy is not greatly developed in the UK and understanding of the idea is in its infancy. Our recommendations below are intended to outline some key steps to help initiate more mainstream debate and action around the idea, without coming at a cost to the public purse.

Definition

The definition of social tourism needs to be cemented and universally agreed upon. We learnt from stakeholders that there is wide variation in the understanding of the concept and no universal working definition of social tourism. We find it encouraging, however, that most stakeholders understood that it should benefit disadvantaged individuals and families. We also noted that benefits delivered to other stakeholders such as the tourism industry, Government and the wider economy need to be acknowledged in any definition of social tourism. Some stakeholders expressed doubts over how useful the term “social tourism” was in explaining what it does and who it benefits.

Recommendation 1: We believe that there is an important need for a clear definition and understanding of social tourism and that all its current practitioners would benefit from a unifying definition to help promote and organise their work to greater effect.

Recommendation 2: We recognise that the term may not be the best name with which to further promote the concept. So we urge all interested stakeholders to explore the use of a new terminology with which to describe and promote social tourism.

Mapping social tourism

It is apparent from the evidence submitted to the inquiry that there is no clear picture of the current status of all social tourism activities in the UK, with many stakeholders unclear on where to look to secure useful information.

Recommendation 3: There is no comprehensive understanding of the size and spread of social tourism activities. Therefore we suggest that an overview or map of the status of social tourism in the UK should be created to fully understand its scale and potential. This could collect key data on:

- The number of organisations that currently have social tourism-related activities
- What these activities entail
- Who these organisations are serving
- Where they are operating
- The size of the funds involved in their activities

Recommendation 4: In order to help initiate this research we suggest the creation of a coordinating working group made up of the Department of Culture, Media and Sport, the Family Holiday Association, VisitEngland, local authorities (including local education boards) and local tourist boards.

Social benefits

We believe that evidence submitted to the inquiry makes a compelling case of the need for greater research into this area. Stakeholders pinpointed a range of potential social welfare benefits, from individual health improvements to wider community integration and relief for public services. While we welcome the contributions of academics at the Universities of Westminster, Surrey and Nottingham, we feel that the arguments made by stakeholders are not supported by a large enough body of robust evidence. We would like this report to encourage further investigation into the long-term welfare benefits of social tourism.

Recommendation 5: We recommend constructing a longitudinal study that compares the impact of taking holidays as opposed to no holidays among individuals and families of similar socio-economic status.

Recommendation 6: We encourage building upon research already established by leading academics in the social tourism field with greater assessment of the long-term benefits social tourism has for physical and mental health, employment, school attainment etc.

Economic benefits

We have found substantial evidence, particularly from Europe, that demonstrates the great economic potential of social tourism. Stakeholders, in particular from the tourism sector, expressed enthusiasm for the gains that could be made. We conclude that well implemented social tourism policies can increase employment, increase tourist spending levels and tax revenues, and extend the tourist season in many of the UK's holiday destinations. This report highlights that if the UK were to replicate the economic successes achieved in Europe the Treasury could see a return of £1.5 in tax revenues for every £1 it invests in social tourism. Beyond this, social tourism schemes have the potential to generate £5 billion of value to the wider economy, as well as deliver important savings for social services. We believe that current research on social tourism has focused too greatly on its social impact and needs to extend to the related economic arguments. There is a need for robust and practical evidence that makes the economic case for the benefits of social tourism in the UK.

Recommendation 7: We propose that Government, industry and other stakeholders come together to create a pilot economic study. The study will be designed and implemented by the working group of stakeholders made up of the Department of Culture, Media and Sport, the Family Holiday Association, VisitEngland, local authorities (including local education boards) and local tourist boards.

We suggest that this study should:

- **Take place in two geographically separate areas that represent key UK tourism markets (e.g. the North West coast and Cornwall)**
- **Measure the level of spare tourist accommodation/facilities at different times of the year**
- **Examine what impact filling this spare capacity would have on the local economy, in particular employment and additional spending levels**
- **Explore how filling this spare capacity could be achieved**

Recommendation 8: We foresee the long-term ambition of a pilot scheme as providing detailed and substantial evidence of the economic benefits of social tourism, as well as a robust, workable and transferable economic model that could be used to promote future social tourism studies/programmes in other regions.

The role of Government and the public sector

We believe it is clear that Government will need to play some kind of role in the development of social tourism policy. Having registered the various positions of stakeholders in favour of national and local level action, and acknowledged the current economic and political climate, we feel it would be unrealistic to call for significant levels of Government funding or support for new social tourism policies. But we do believe that greater acknowledgement from the Government is needed as a first step in moving the concept of social tourism into mainstream policy considerations. It is also clear from the evidence supplied to the inquiry that social tourism touches on numerous areas of policy and that its success as a concept will depend on collaborative efforts. Finally, our report also highlights the difficulties that families face in accessing affordable breaks during school holidays, as well as the positive impact a break away can have on children and the family unit as a whole.

Recommendation 9: We regret that the Government missed an opportunity to include social tourism in its recently published tourism strategy and call on all future strategies and messages to acknowledge its existence and potential.

Recommendation 10: We call on the Government departments to create a cross-Whitehall committee on social tourism to explore how best their remits and activities can benefit from and support the concept, and to ensure that an integrated approach is adopted.

Recommendation 11: As a result of the evidence provided to the inquiry we would urge the Department of Education to recognise and explore the potential benefits that mid-term breaks have on children's educational attainment.

We would also welcome an investigation into the potential usage of a child's permitted 10 days off school a year. This could look at:

- How many families currently use these days for taking a holiday
- The economic impact these holidays have
- How mid-term holidays could be coordinated by schools
- How holidays could be combined with educational schemes and projects
- How mid-term holidays could be promoted (for example we propose exploring the potential of a voucher system)

Lessons from Europe

Throughout this report we have referred to evidence shared by European stakeholders operating social tourism schemes. IMSERSO in Spain, ANCV in France and the activities of the Flanders Tourist Board are differing examples of how to deliver such schemes, but all demonstrate the potential for large-scale economic and social benefits. Overall we noted that while IMSERSO received praise from stakeholders for the economic value it delivered, the voucher and brochure mechanisms employed by ANCV and the Flanders Tourist Board were most often recommended as models for the UK. We also noted the positive efforts of the European Commission to promote best practice at the supranational level through the Calypso programme. We believe, on the basis of stakeholder comment, that the scheme is hampered by the lack of participation of major tourism destination nations such as the UK or Germany.

Recommendation 12: We would like to see the Government participating in the European Commission's Calypso programme on social tourism. While we recognise the programme is not without its limitations, participation will not cost the UK any funds, will give it ready access to an important forum for exploring best tourism practice and will be a symbolic gesture indicating the Government recognises the concept of social tourism.

Recommendation 13: We greatly welcome evidence from stakeholders in Europe and acknowledge the examples of best practice supplied by them. We ask the Government to look at these practices and to explore what lessons can be drawn. We also believe that evidence of best practice in Europe should also be explored by the steering group leading the economic pilot studies outlined above.

Recommendation 14: In the long term we would encourage the creation of a mechanism (e.g. a brochure or website) that easily matches the demands of a customer (e.g. families or social services) with the needs of the suppliers (e.g. the tourism industry) at a national level.

Next Steps

Many of the steps that need to be taken to further the development of social tourism in the UK are outlined in the recommendations of this report. These will largely be long-term in their development. For action of a more immediate nature we would call on stakeholders to consider what could be done to draw attention to social tourism as a policy area and substantially demonstrate its potential in the short term.

Recommendation 15: We draw attention to the great potential for 2012's Queen's Diamond Jubilee and the Olympics and Paralympics events to incorporate social tourism initiatives, for example the provision of Olympics tickets for disadvantaged families outside of London. We would therefore call on all social tourism stakeholders to think creatively about how these opportunities could be best built upon.

Appendix

Written Submissions

Written submissions were received from the following individuals and organisations:

Association of British Travel Agents (ABTA)
Agence Nationale pour les Chèques-Vacances (ANCV), France
Barnado's
Blackpool Council
Bournemouth Borough Council
British Hospitality Association (BHA)
Canvas Holidays
The Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), UK
East of England Tourism
European Commission
Family Fund
Flanders Tourist Board, Belgium
IMSERSO, Spain
International Social Tourism Organisation (ISTO)
Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, Northern Ireland Executive
Sailors Families Society
Scott McCabe, Nottingham University Business School
South West Tourism
Thanet District Council
Tourism Alliance
Tourism For All
The Universities of Westminster and Surrey
VisitEngland
VisitScotland
Welcome to Yorkshire
Youth Hostel Association - England and Wales

Oral Evidence Sessions

8th June 2011

- **Family Holiday Association**
John McDonald, Director
Thea Joldersma, Programme and Policy Manager
- **Tourism Alliance**
Kurt Janson, Policy Director
- **Canvas Holidays**
Simon Allan, Managing Director
- **Delce Junior School**
Karen White, Head teacher
- **Safer Places**
Ann-Marie Sweetland, Outreach Worker

9th June 2011

- **Agence National pour les Chèques-Vacances (ANCV)**
Philippe Kaspi, Director General
- **IMSERSO**
Mercedes Castro López, Técnica Superior de Estudios
Maria Ángeles Aguado, Deputy General Director of Management
- **Blackpool Council**
Steve Weaver, Chief Executive
- **South West Tourism Alliance**
Deirdre Makepeace, Marketing and Communications Support
Andy Jasper, Eden Project Research Manager

14th June 2011

- **Family Fund**
Derek Walpole, Chief Executive
- **Grandparents Association**
Lynn Chesterman, Chief Executive
- **UNISON Welfare**
Julie Grant, Head
- **Youth Hostel Association**
Sam Littlechilds, International Policy Officer
- **Tourism For All**
Jenifer Littman, Chief Executive

15th June 2011

- **ABTA/Thomas Cook**
Andrew Cooper, Director
- **Flanders Tourist Board**
Luc Gobin, Head of Tourism
- **VisitEngland**
James Berresford, Chief Executive
Philip Evans, Head of Insight

All the written submissions and transcripts of the oral evidence can be read in full online at http://appgonsocialtourism.nationbuilder.com/2011_inquiry.

All-Party Parliamentary Group on Social Tourism Secretariat

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