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delivering results : measuring what matters

Hunstanton Visitor Survey

Report of Findings

Prepared for: Borough Council of King's Lynn &

West Norfolk

February 2017

Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1   INTRODUCTION

1.1.1   This document presents the key findings of research that was carried out to provide primary research and an analysis of current visitors to Hunstanton. It includes the findings of two surveys, one of current staying visitors and the other of day visitors. In addition, an observation study was carried out around the Esplanade Gardens and Green area of Hunstanton.

1.2   STAYING VISITORS

1.2.1   The questionnaire for staying visitors was made available at all the accommodation providers in Hunstanton. A total of 1465 completed questionnaires were returned and used to produce the results. Of these, 812 were from visitors to holiday parks and 45 were collected by self-catering accommodation providers. The remaining 608 interviews were completed at various serviced accommodation.

1.2.2   The results show that 68% of people stayed between 2 and 4 nights, just 7% stayed one nights and 25% spent 5 nights or more.

1.2.3   The main reason for visiting is leisure and holiday purpose.

1.2.4   Three-quarters of respondents had visited before, either in 2016 (25%) or in 2015 (45%), which shows that Hunstanton benefits from a very loyal customer base that visits the town frequently.

1.2.5   Key things that would encourage visitors to take a longer stay or visit Hunstanton more frequently in the future include a wider range of amenities and facilities as well as longer opening hours.

1.2.6   Key activities enjoyed during the visit included visits to the promenade and Hunstanton beach, and eating out (table service) and shopping trips.

1.2.7   About half of all the respondents had visited other resorts during their trip, using Hunstanton as a base to explore other destinations in west and north Norfolk.

1.2.8   On average, visitor groups consisted of 2.9 people per visiting group (2.4 adults and 0.5 children per group). Of all the visiting groups, 411 (or 28% of visiting groups) included

children up to 15 years old. The average visiting groups with children consisted of 2.6 adults and 1.7 children under 15 years of age.

1.2.9   Hunstanton reflects an older age profile, as the highest proportion of visitors fell within the 55-64 and over 65 categories, with 16% and 31% of the sample respectively, followed by 45-54 years (14%) and 35-44 years (11%). Female visitors accounted for 55% of all visitors and the remaining 45% were male.

1.2.10   Most visitors staying overnight in Hunstanton came from the East Midlands and the East of England (37% each).

Best and worst things about Hunstanton

1.2.11   The beach is the most popular appealing feature of Hunstanton. Other words such as 'friendly people', 'the promenade', 'shops' and 'gardens' were also identified as having a positive association with Hunstanton. The town is often described as 'lovely' and 'nice' and many emphasise a general sense of cleanliness.

1.2.12   Respondents were asked to mention three things that are unappealing about Hunstanton. Their responses were grouped into key themes. The amusements and arcades by the seafront generated several comments relating to the general aspect and the fact that the promenade looks dated and in need of some upgrades. Some also mentioned the lack of activities and attractions suitable for younger children, including a lack of play areas.

1.2.13   Concerns about the weather also rank high in people's minds. Clearly control over the weather is beyond the destination managers' control, although consideration should be given to ensuring that all weather facilities and attractions are included in the marketing campaigns and other publicity.

1.2.14   The cost and availability of parking spaces is also seen as a weak point about Hunstanton. Traffic (specially getting in and out of Hunstanton) was mentioned by a significant proportion of respondents. Many people mentioned the limited range of shops and the fact that many businesses close too early. Large numbers of dogs and birds (seagulls, pigeons, ducks) pose some problems related to noise and cleanliness. The beach is mentioned for several reasons, including lack of cleanliness, the presence of dogs and that there are too many stones in some areas.

1.2.15   Finally, respondents were asked to describe Hunstanton in three words. It is encouraging to see that the word 'friendly' appears to be the best way to describe the atmosphere

that visitors experienced during their stay. Other words cited frequently were 'clean' and 'relaxing'.

1.3   DAY VISITORS

1.3.1   The questionnaire for day visitors was undertaken via face-to-face interviews. A total of 480 interviews were completed, with interviews taking place at the Promenade, the Esplanade Gardens and High Street on 8 specified dates between May and September.

1.3.2   The main reason for visiting is leisure and holiday purpose.

1.3.3   Four in five respondents were classified as day-trippers. The remaining 20% were touring the area and visiting Hunstanton for the day, as part of their holiday.

1.3.4   Respondents were presented with a list of activities and asked to indicate which ones they had enjoyed or planning to take part in during the duration of their visit to Hunstanton. Higher proportions of respondents selected walking (69%) and eating out (66%).

1.3.5   There is a high proportion or return visitors (87%). the majority (six in ten respondents) made six or more previous visits.

1.3.6   Two fifths (41%) would consider a future overnight stay in Hunstanton. Those who said they would not consider an overnight stay (59% or 206 respondents) were asked what would persuade them to make a staying visit to Hunstanton in the future.

1.3.7   About half of those who responded to the question (93 in total) said they would not consider it as they live too close to Hunstanton to stay overnight. Respondents who live far enough away mentioned a wider variety of attractions and amusements for families as a key factor to encourage a longer visit. Some comments related to finding the right type of accommodation and at the right cost. Finally, there were some comments made about personal budget-related limitations.

1.3.8   On average, visitor groups consisted of 2.8 people per visiting group (2.1 adults and 0.7 children per group). Of all the visiting groups, 181 (or 38% of visiting groups) included children up to 15 years old. The average visiting groups with children consisted of 2.1 adults and 1.7 children under 15 years of age.

1.3.9   Hunstanton reflects an older age profile, as the highest proportion of visitors fell within the 55-64 and over 65 years' categories (14% and 21% of the sample respectively). Female visitors accounted for 57% of all visitors and the remaining 43% were male.

1.3.10   As you would expect, the majority of visitors live in Norfolk although a sizeable proportion (33%) arrived from East Midlands. Our analysis shows that about 14% of all day trippers live 20 miles or closer to Hunstanton.

1.3.11   Respondents were asked to specify the time of arrival and their planned departure time. Peak arrival times are between 10:00 and 12:00. Then there's a relatively quieter time between 12:00 and 14:00. After that visitor start to leave for the day, with peaks of movement between 15:00 and 16:00 and significant drop in numbers after 19:00.

1.3.12   Based on the arrival and departure times it is possible to estimate that the average length of stay in Hunstanton for day trippers is 5 hours and 8 minutes.

1.3.13   The survey shows that most visitors to Hunstanton fell within the C1 (45%), which is well above the national average (29%), followed by DE (26%) and C2 (24%) socio-economic groups. Additionally, 5% of visitors were classified within the highest group (AB).

Best and worst things about Hunstanton

1.3.14   The beach area and the views of the sea, the friendly atmosphere, shops and the food, specially fish and chips outlets were highlighted as best things about Hunstanton.

1.3.15   When asked about the three things that are unappealing about Hunstanton many people mentioned parking (both in terms of its limited availability and costs). However, as was the case in the day visitor section of this report, it is worth mentioning that the cost and availability of parking spaces is a recurring problem with many tourism destinations across the UK and by no means unique to Hunstanton. Traffic congestion was also mentioned frequently as it limits ease of movement around the town.

1.3.16   Comments about the weather are beyond the destination managers' control, although consideration should be given to ensuring that all weather facilities and attractions are included in the marketing campaigns and other publicity.

1.3.17   The beach is mentioned for several reasons because respondents felt there were too many stones in some areas and because of the lack of cleanliness. The amusements and arcades by the seafront were mentioned by some, including the general aspect and the

need for improving the aspect of the area. A few mentioned the lack of activities and attractions suitable for younger children, including a lack of play areas.

1.4   OBSERVATIONS

1.4.1   A series of visitor count and observations took place designed to monitor visitor the numbers and types of users around the Esplanade Gardens and Green. The information recorded included estimated age groups, gender, ethnicity and any visible disabilities.

1.4.2   Visitor counting took place between 10:00 and 17:00 on the agreed dates.

1.4.3   The daily count chart shows that visitor numbers were higher at weekends and during the summer school holiday period.

1.4.4   The time of the day also influenced the volume of visitors. Lunchtime (between 12:00 and 13:00) attracted the highest number of visitors, followed by early afternoon (14:00 to 15:00).

1.4.5   A greater proportion of users were middle-aged, accounting for over a third of users.

1.4.6   One in every 43 users (or 2% of all users) was deemed to be of black ethnicity or of another minority ethnicity.

1.4.7   About one in 27 users had a disability. This represents 4% of all users.

2   INTRODUCTION

2.1   This document

2.1.1   The client (Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk) is exploring ways to encourage visitors to stay longer and visit Hunstanton more frequently. This document presents the key findings of research that was carried out to provide primary research and an analysis of current visitors to Hunstanton. It includes the findings of two surveys, one of current staying visitors and the other of day visitors. In addition, an observation study was carried out around the Esplanade Gardens and Green area of Hunstanton.

2.2   Staying visitors

2.2.1   All serviced accommodation providers in Hunstanton we invited to take part in the data collection process and about two thirds of establishments agreed to take part. Participating businesses invited their guests to complete the questionnaire. In addition, Norfolk Holiday Homes distributed copies of the questionnaire in all their self catering properties. The questionnaire was designed to capture information relating to the following:

- Home location
- Date of stay
- Length of stay
- Name of accommodation
- Number of people in the visiting group and number in different age bands
- When the most recent visit was
- What did you do in Hunstanton during your visit
- Where did you visit outside of the resort – open question
- What would encourage you to take a longer stay or visit more frequently
- Describe Hunstanton in 3 words
- Three best things about the resort
- Three worst things about the resort
- Three things that would improve the resort

2.2.2   A total of 1465 completed questionnaires were returned and used to produce the results. Of these, 812 were from visitors to holiday parks and 45 were collected by self-catering accommodation providers. The remaining 608 interviews were completed at various serviced accommodation (hotels, B&Bs, guest houses) within Hunstanton. The full list of participating establishments is as follows.

Table 1: Participating establishments	Completed questionnaires
Holiday Parks	
Manor Park (Park Resorts)	275
Searles	537
Self-Catering	
Norfolk Holiday Homes (SC)	45
Service accommodation	
Ashleigh Lodge	53
Elinbrook Guest House	42
Gate Lodge	56
Glenberis	117
Kingfisher B&B	5
Miramar	43
Peacock House	50
Rosamaly Guest House	17
The Burleigh	186
The Shellbrooke	8
The White Cottage	31
TOTAL	1465

2.3 Day Visitors

2.3.1 The questionnaire for day visitors was undertaken via face-to-face interviews. A total of 480 interviews were completed, with interviews taking place at the Promenade, the Esplanade Gardens and High Street on the following dates:

- Sunday, 29th May
- Tuesday, 14th June
- Saturday, 9th July
- Monday, 25th July
- Sunday, 7th August
- Wednesday, 24th August
- Thursday, 8th September
- Saturday, 24th September

2.3.2   The questionnaire for day visitors seeks to capture information relating to the following:

- Home location
- If they had considered staying at the resort and then asking the reasons, depending on their answer
- Number of children in visiting group
- When the most recent visit was – find out the regularity of visits
- What did you do in Hunstanton during your visit – specific list to be provided
- Would you consider making a staying visit of at least one night in Hunstanton
- What would persuade you to make a staying visit
- Describe Hunstanton in 3 words
- Three best things about the resort
- Three worst things about the resort
- Three things that would improve the resort

2.4   Questionnaire design

2.4.1   Questionnaires were standardised with a mixture of fixed, fixed alternatives (multi-choice) questions and Likert-based scales (i.e. poor to excellent scores) to obtain opinions. Open-ended questions were also included to ensure that qualitative information was obtained. The day visitor survey involved the use of show cards to enable people to choose their answers from a list of options.

2.4.2   To ensure quality control, all survey and observation work was managed directly by Destination Research. This involved the preparation of all survey materials, the design of the interview schedule, the checking of questionnaires, coding the results, running the analysis and report writing. The survey was conducted in accordance with the MRS Code of Conduct:

- All fieldwork was carried out by fully trained market research interviewers local to the area, many of whom had worked on similar projects
- Only one person per group was interviewed
- Only visitors over the age of 16 were interviewed, as set down by the MRS Code of Conduct

2.4.3   Interviewing was quality controlled in terms of random checks on-site and the back-checking of questionnaires. Furthermore, we held a debrief session with the fieldworkers

at the end of the survey period to get maximum value from the more anecdotal intelligence that face-to-face interviewing yields.

2.4.4   Data from the completed surveys was inputted into SNAP survey software. This is a powerful survey software that enables us to obtain key insights, generate tabulation, percentages and statistical testing for accuracy, thus ensuring the quality and reliability of the results.

2.5   Observations

2.5.1   A series of visitor count and observations took place at the Esplanade Gardens and Green in Hunstanton, as part of a Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) funded project called 'Parks for People'.

2.5.2   As part of the project, there was a requirement to monitor the numbers and types of users around the Esplanade Gardens and Green. The observation work will help to measure the extent to which, as a result of the HLF funding, more people and a wider range of people are engaged with heritage in the area of study.

2.5.3   Observations took place from an area around the butterfly shelters, which provided a good viewing point for those who were in the Esplanade Gardens, as well as those on the Green. Visitors were recorded as they passed a given point. To ensure that visitors were not recorded twice, a note was made of any of their distinguishing features, such as clothes.

2.5.4   The observations were conducted from the end of May until the end of September, as per the following schedule.

- Sunday, 29th May
- Tuesday, 14th June
- Saturday, 9th July
- Monday, 25th July
- Sunday, 7th August
- Wednesday, 24th August
- Thursday, 8th September
- Saturday, 24th September

2.6   Presentation of results and key findings.

2.6.1   The findings are presented under the following headings:
- Report of findings: Staying visitors

- Report of findings: Day visitors
- Report of findings: Observations
- Appendices

3   REPORT OF FINDINGS: STAYING VISITORS

3.1   Number of nights spent in the area

3.1.1   Respondents were asked to specify the number of nights spent at the establishment where they completed the survey. The results show that 68% of people stayed between 2 and 4 nights, just 7% stayed one nights and 25% spent 5 nights or more.

Number of nights spent	Percentage
1	7%
2	18%
3	24%
4	26%
5	4%
6	3%
7	17%
8+	1%

3.2   Main reason for visiting

3.2.1   The clear majority of responders visited Hunstanton for holiday purposes.

Table 3: Main reason for visiting	Percentage
Leisure/holiday	94%
Visiting friends or relatives	4%
Business/attending a conference	0%
Other	2%

3.3   Previous visits

3.3.1   Four out of five respondents (80%) had visited Hunstanton previously at the time of completing the survey.

First ever visit to Hunstanton?

No, 80%   Yes, 20%
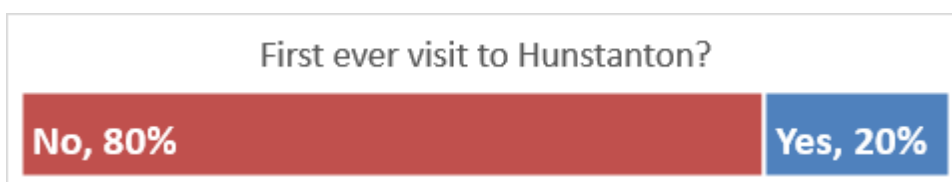
3.3.2   Repeat visitors were asked to specify the time when the last visit took place. The results showed three-quarters of respondents had visited before, either in 2016 (25%) or in 2015 (45%), which shows that Hunstanton benefits from a very loyal customer base that visits the town frequently. See Table 4.

Table 4: When did you last visit?	Year
2016	25%
2015	45%
2014	9%
2013	5%
2012	2%
2011	2%
2010	1%
2009 or earlier	10%

3.3.3   20% of the respondents who were visiting Hunstanton for the first time were asked to state if there was anything that would encourage them to take a longer stay or visit Hunstanton more frequently in the future. About half of all first-time visitors provided one or more answers to this question. These are summarised below. Note that their responses were grouped into key themes to make the analysis more useful.

3.3.4   About a third of respondents (45 out of 131 respondents) mentioned the range and quality of facilities. The most common request related to outdoor attractions such as pools, water slides and other facilities for kids. A wider variety of places to eat, including vegetarian options was also a common request. Similarly, a wider range of shops would also be welcomed and would encourage repeat visits.

3.3.5   Other, less common requests relating to facilities referred to better public transport (including, trains from King's Lynn and leisure trips such as Skegness by boat), more cultural events, improved quality of accommodation and access to free Wi-Fi.

3.3.6   A second larger group of comments, also mention by about a third of respondents, relates to the willingness to visit again based on the positive impression of their first visit and the perception of Hunstanton as gateway to further exploring the wider area, including the Norfolk coast, nature, beaches, walks and historic sites.

3.3.7   Smaller percentages of respondents claimed they would find it difficult to visit again in the future. Some respondents (8%) commented the lack of time for a future visit. A similar group of respondents suggested that better weather would encourage them to visit again. Whilst destination managers have no control over weather conditions, it is

important to emphasise the range of all-weather attractions available in and around Hunstanton.

3.3.8   Finally, there were a few requests for attractions and shops to open longer hours. Some comments (7 individual comments or 5% of all comments) related to the availability and cost of parking. Finally, improved cleanliness was mentioned nine times. This includes the beach area, which was mentioned several times in terms of improved cleanliness. Furthermore, one respondent asked for dogs being allowed on the beach, although another respondent felt dogs should not be allowed.

3.4   Activities enjoyed during the visit

3.4.1   Respondents were presented with a list of activities and asked to indicate which ones they had enjoyed or were planning to take part in during the duration of their visit to Hunstanton. The highest proportion of respondents selected visits to the promenade (79%), Hunstanton beach (75%) and eating out (table service), which was selected by 74% of all respondents. Shopping trips and visits to Old Hunstanton beach were also popular choices, selected by 54% and 50% respectively

Table 5: Activities enjoyed during visit	Percentage
The promenade	79%
Hunstanton beach	74%
Eating out (table service)	74%
Shopping	54%
Old Hunstanton beach	50%
Amusements arcades or fun fair	38%
Visiting gardens	37%
Walking on Norfolk Coast path /other signed walking routes	33%
Visiting pubs or clubs	32%
Eating out (take away)	32%
Exploring heritage	28%
Sealife Sanctuary	26%
Visiting the market	25%
Visiting art/craft galleries	22%
Tourist Information Centre	20%
Going on a sea tour	19%
Birdwatching	18%
Pitch and putt, putting or foot golf	17%
Visiting Princess Theatre	11%
Oasis pool or leisure centre facilities	9%
Outdoor bowls	4%
Water sports	1%

3.4.2   About half of all the respondents (745 people out of 1465) had visited other resorts during their stay in Hunstanton. The clear majority visited more than one destination, meaning they used Hunstanton as a base to explore other destinations in west and north Norfolk during their stay. The following word cloud summarises the key destinations and highlights the importance of Wells-next-the-Sea as a visitor destination.

3.4.3   About two-thirds (63%) of respondents who were visiting other destinations outside Hunstanton had visited other beaches. Half (49%) ate out and about two in five (43%) visited historic houses, castles and churches.

Table 6: Activities enjoyed outside Hunstanton	Percentage
Visiting other beaches	63%
Eating out	49%
Historic houses/castles/churches	43%
Nature reserves/wildlife parks	29%
Walking trails	29%
Other towns	28%
Arts centre & galleries	13%
Events	7%
Cycling	4%
Sports	3%

3.5   Best and worse things about Hunstanton

3.5.1   The beach is the most popular appealing feature of Hunstanton. The word cloud also identified 'friendly people', 'the promenade', and 'gardens' as having a positive association with Hunstanton. The town is often described as 'lovely' and 'nice' and many emphasise a general sense of cleanliness.

The best three things about Hunstanton are…

3.5.2   Respondents were asked to mention three things that are unappealing about Hunstanton. Their responses were grouped into key themes to make the analysis more useful. The amusements and arcades by the seafront generated several comments relating to the general aspect and the fact that the promenade looks dated and in need of some upgrades. Some also mentioned the lack of activities and attractions suitable for younger children, including a lack of play areas.

3.5.3   Concerns about the weather also rank high in people's minds. Clearly control over the weather is beyond the destination managers' control, although consideration should be given to ensuring that all weather facilities and attractions are included in the marketing campaigns and other publicity.

3.5.4   The cost and availability of parking spaces is also seen as a weak point about Hunstanton. However, it is worth mentioning that the cost and availability of parking spaces is a recurring problem with many tourism destinations across the UK. Traffic (specially getting in and out of Hunstanton) was also mentioned by a significant proportion of respondents. Many people mentioned the limited range of shops and the fact that many businesses close too early. Large numbers of dogs and seagulls pose some problems relating to noise and cleanliness. The beach is mentioned for several reasons, including lack of cleanliness, the presence of dogs and presence of too many stones.

3.5.5   Other secondary themes identified in our analysis relate to limited phone signal, general cleanliness, availability and cleanliness of public toilet facilities, accessibility, a lack of cultural facilities and the time it takes to reach Hunstanton.

Table 7 – Worse things about Hunstanton (Staying visitors)		
Category	Count	Sub-categories
Attractions	166	Amusement arcades (81) Promenade looking dated (50) Limited offer for younger kids
Weather	166	Wind / rain / General weather
Car Parks	145	Parking in general (48) Car parking charges (45) Limited availavility (43)
Food and Drink	142	Limited variety (100) Price / Other comments
Animals	121	Dogs (69) - *Too many / dog mess / on the beach* Seagulls / pigeons / ducks (52)- Noise / mess
Shopping	116	Limited range of shops (69) Empty shops / Quality of shops
Traffic	104	Getting in and out of Hunstanton Town traffic / roadworks
Opening hours	103	Limited opening times Limited offer out of main season
Seafront / facilities	103	New developments / Lack of Pier Need for more seating areas Various others
Beach	65	Too many stones Too many dogs on beach / Lack of pet friendly areas Rubish / dirty
Overcrowded / noise	48	Too busy in summer Overcrowded Cyclists on seafront
Phone signal / reception	47	Limited phone coverage / WiFi
General cleanliness	46	Litter / Lack of recycling facilities
Public Toilets	43	Limited availability Cleanliness
Access	41	Hills / steps / limited wheelchair access Paths and lighting
Public transport	34	Raillinks / buses (evening) / coastal hopper
Limited cultural offer	30	Cinema Theatre / shows Evening entertainment / nightlife
Location	29	A long distance from home
Accommodation	23	Quality / cleanliness Cost of accommodation

| Feeling of welcome | 15 | Anti-social behaviour |
| | | Poor cutomer service |

3.5.6   The following word cloud summarises the three words that respondents used to describe Hunstanton. It is encouraging to see that the word 'friendly' appears to be the best way to describe the atmosphere that visitors experienced during their stay. Other words cited frequently were 'clean' and 'relaxing'.

3.5.7   Overall, the response rate for these questions (best thing, worse thing and three words to describe Hunstanton) were high, with 94% of respondents listing at least one thing that's good about the town and 61% providing at least one example of what's worst about Hunstanton. When asked to describe Hunstanton in three words, 89% of respondents provided at least one word and two in three (66%) gave three words to describe Hunstanton.

3.6   Age Groups

3.6.1   On average, visitor groups consisted of 2.9 people per visiting group (2.4 adults and 0.5 children per group). Of all the visiting groups, 411 (or 28% of visiting groups) included children up to 15 years old. The average visiting groups with children consisted of 2.6 adults and 1.7 children under 15 years of age.

3.6.2   Hunstanton reflects an older age profile, as the highest proportion of visitors fell within the 55-64 and over 65 categories, with 16% and 31% of the sample respectively, followed by 45-54 years (14%) and 35-44 years (11%). Female visitors accounted for 55% of all visitors and the remaining 45% were male.

Table 8: Age and gender composition			
Age groups	Male	Female	Total
0-5	4%	4%	8%
6-10	2%	3%	5%
11-15	2%	2%	4%
16-24	2%	2%	4%
25-34	3%	4%	7%
35-44	5%	6%	11%
45-54	6%	8%	14%
55-64	7%	9%	16%
65+	14%	17%	31%
Total	45%	55%	100%
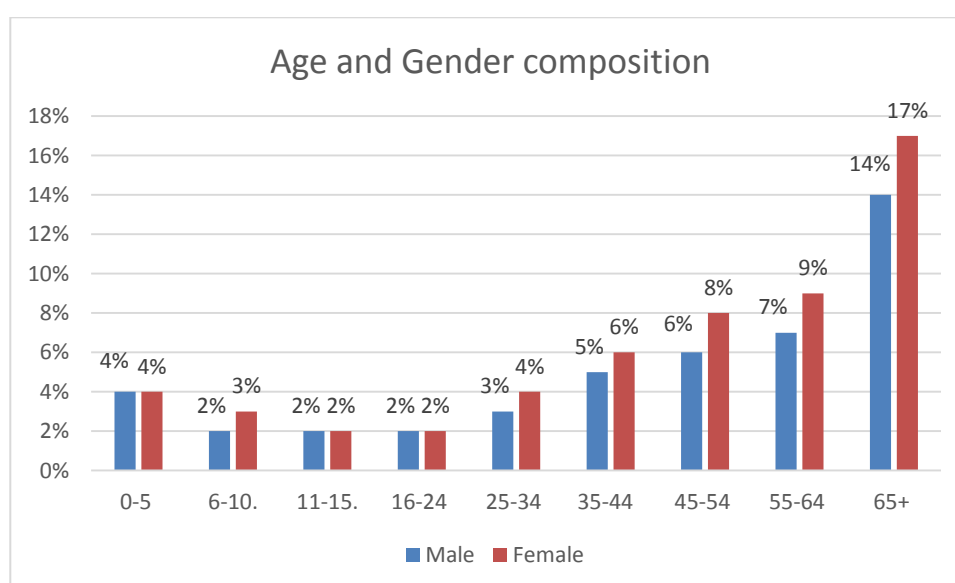
3.7   Origin

3.7.1   Most visitors staying overnight in Hunstanton came from the East Midlands and the East of England (37% each). In terms of counties of origin, the largest proportion of visitors originated from Northamptonshire and Leicestershire (each making up 9% of the total sample), followed by Cambridgeshire (8%) and Norfolk (7%).

3.7.2   The following two maps show the distribution of visitors by region and postcode clusters.

Table 9: County of origin	Percentage
Northamptonshire	9%
Leicestershire	9%
Cambridgeshire	8%
Norfolk	7%
Nottinghamshire	6%
Suffolk	6%
Lincolnshire	6%
Essex	6%
Hertfordshire	4%
Derbyshire	3%
Bedfordshire	3%

Map 1: Origin of staying visitors to Hunstanton by region of origin

Map 2: Origin of staying visitors to Hunstanton by postcode clusters

4   REPORT OF FINDINGS: DAY VISITORS

4.1   Type of visitor

4.1.1   Four in five respondents were classified as day-trippers, as they travelled to Hunstanton on the day of the interview and were planning to return to their homes that same day. The remaining 20% were visiting Hunstanton as part of a tourism holiday. The results show that these respondents spent an average of 4.9 nights away from home.

4.1.2   Most of those touring the area were staying in locations nearby and within Norfolk, as shown in the following word cloud.

4.2   Main reason for visiting

4.2.1   Nine out of ten respondents (91%) visited Hunstanton for a leisure visit and 5% were visiting friends and relatives.

Table 10: Main reason for visiting	Percentage
Leisure/holiday	91%
Visiting friends or relatives	5%
Shopping trip (special/non-reg.)	1%
Other	2%

4.3   Activities enjoyed during the visit

4.3.1   Respondents were presented with a list of activities and asked to indicate which ones they had enjoyed or planning to take part in during the duration of their visit to Hunstanton. Higher proportions of respondents selected walking (69%) and eating out (66%).

4.3.2   Going to the beach and shopping trips were also popular choices, selected by 52% and 40% respectively.

Table 11: Activities undertaken	Percentage
Walking	69%
Eating out	66%
Beaches	52%
Shopping	40%
Visitor Attractions	18%
Parks and Gardens	17%
Local Markets / Food and Drink	10%
Pubs/Clubs	9%
Leisure Centre	8%
Exploring Heritage	7%
Nature Reserves / Wildlife Parks	5%
Birdwatching	4%
Cycling	2%
Events	2%
Theatre/Shows	1%
Museums/Art Galleries	1%
Other	11%

4.4   Previous visits

4.4.1   Repeat visitors made up the last part of the sample, with 87% stating they had visited Hunstanton before.

First ever visit to Hunstanton?

■ Yes   ■ No

No, 87%   Yes, 13%

4.4.2   Repeat visitors were asked to specify the number of times they had visited the town previously. Table 12 shows that almost 6 in 10 respondents are regular visitors to Hunstanton, having been to the town more than six times previously.

4.4.3   Over a quarter of these previous visits involved an overnight stay in Hunstanton.

Table 12: Previous visits	Percentage
1 or 2 times	17%
3 or 4 times	14%
5 or 6 times	10%
More than 6 times	59%

4.5 Length of stay

4.5.1 Respondents were asked to specify the time of arrival and their planned departure time. The chart below shows that the peak arrival times are between 10:00 and 12:00. Then there's a relatively quieter time between 12:00 and 14:00. After that visitor start to leave for the day, with peaks of movement between 15:00 and 16:00 and significant drop in numbers after 19:00.

4.5.2 Based on the arrival and departure times it is possible to estimate that the average length of stay in Hunstanton for day trippers is 5 hours and 8 minutes.
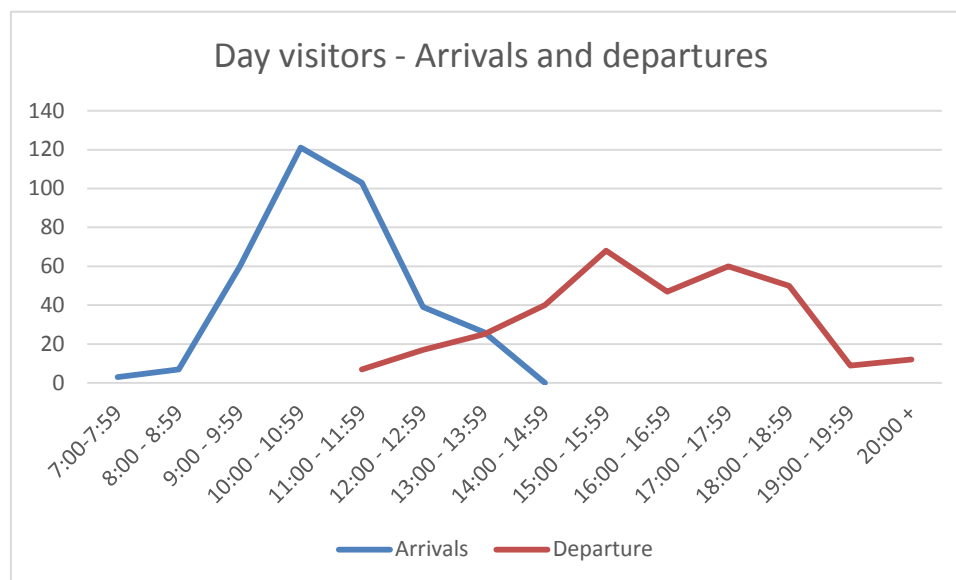
4.6 Overnight visits

4.6.1 Repeat visitors were asked whether their previous visits to Hunstanton had involved an overnight stay in the town. Just over a quarter (27%) stayed overnight in the past.

4.6.2 The remaining three-quarters (73% or 350 respondents) were asked whether they would consider an overnight stay in Hunstanton. It is encouraging to see that that two-fifths of them (41% or 144 visitors) responded positively to that question.

Would consider an overnights stay

Yes 41%

No 59%
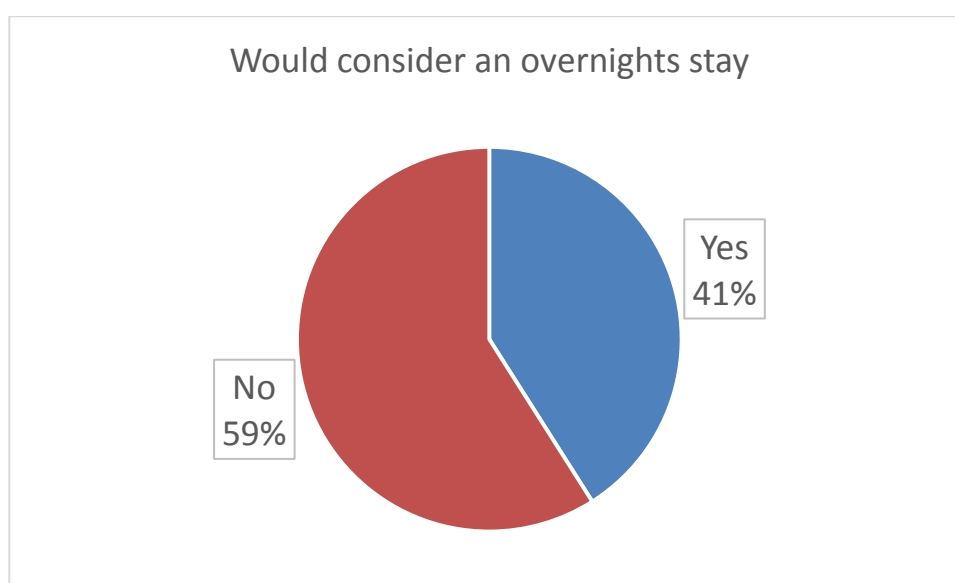
4.6.3 When asked about the type of accommodation they would be most likely to stay in, the results of the survey show that just over a quarter (28%) of potential overnight visitors would choose to stay in an B&B or Guest House and a similar proportion of respondents (26%) would prefer to stay in a hotel. About a fifth (18%) said they would be most likely to stay in a static caravan or holiday village.

Table 13: Accommodation choice	Percentage
B&B/Guest House/Inn	28%
Hotel	26%
Static caravan / Lodges/ Holiday village	18%
Touring caravan / Camping	15%
Rented self-catering accommodation	11%
Hostel	1%
Home of friend / relative	1%
Second home of family or friend	1%
Other	0%

4.6.1   Those who said they would not consider an overnight stay (59% or 206 respondents) were asked what would persuade them to make a staying visit to Hunstanton in the future.

4.6.2   About half of those who responded to the question (93 in total) said they would not consider it as they live too close to Hunstanton to stay overnight. Respondents who live far enough away mentioned a wider variety of attractions and amusements for families as a key factor to encourage a longer visit. Some comments related to finding the right type of accommodation and at the right cost. Finally, there were some comments made about personal budget-related limitations.

4.7   Best and worse things about Hunstanton

4.7.1   The beach is the most popular appealing feature of Hunstanton. The word cloud also identified that a friendly environment, cleanliness and traditional takeaway food, such as fish and chips, have a positive association with Hunstanton.

The best three things about Hunstanton are…

4.7.2   When asked about the three things that are unappealing about Hunstanton many people mentioned parking (both in terms of its limited availability and costs). However, as was the case in the day visitor section of this report, it is worth mentioning that the cost and availability of parking spaces is a recurring problem with many tourism destinations across the UK and by no means unique to Hunstanton. Traffic congestion was also mentioned frequently as it limits ease of movement around the town.

4.7.3   Comments about the weather are beyond the destination managers' control, although consideration should be given to ensuring that all weather facilities and attractions are included in the marketing campaigns and other publicity.

4.7.4   The beach is mentioned for several reasons because respondents felt there were too many stones in some areas and because of the lack of cleanliness.

4.7.5   The amusements and arcades by the seafront were mentioned by some, including the general aspect and the need for improving the aspect of the area. A few mentioned the lack of activities and attractions suitable for younger children, including a lack of play areas.

4.7.6   Other secondary themes identified in our analysis relate to the presence of dogs and sea birds (noise, mess), the limited range of food outlets, shops closing too early, insufficient phone signal and general cleanliness.

4.7.7   Some respondents commented on the limited range of shops. The state of the toilet facilities (both their availability and cleanliness) was also a cause of concern for some of the respondents.

The worse three things about Hunstanton are…

Table 14 – Worse things about Hunstanton (Day visitors)		
Category	**Count**	**Sub-categories**
Car Parks	46	Car parking charges Limited availavility
Weather	38	Wind / rain / General weather
Traffic	34	Getting in and out of Hunstanton Town traffic / roadworks
Beach	29	Too many stones Rubbish / dirty
Attractions	26	Amusement arcades Promenade looking dated Limited offer for younger kids
Shopping	19	Limited range of shops Empty shops
Public Toilets	19	Limited availability Cleanliness
Animals	16	Dogs Seagulls
Overcrowded / noise	15	Too busy in summer Overcrowded
Food and Drink	10	Limited variety / Price
Opening hours	8	Limited opening times

| Phone signal / reception | 8 | Limited phone coverage / WiFi |
| General cleanliness | 7 | Litter |

4.7.8   The following word cloud summarises the three words that respondents used to describe Hunstanton. It is encouraging to see that once again, the word 'friendly' appears to be the best way to describe the atmosphere that visitors experienced during their visit. Other words cited frequently were 'clean' and 'nice'.

4.7.9   Overall, the response rate for these questions (best thing, worse thing and three words to describe Hunstanton) were high, with 99% of respondents listing at least one thing that's good about the town, and 51% providing at least one example of what's worst about Hunstanton. When asked to describe Hunstanton in three words, 95% of respondent provided at least one word and two in three (67%) gave three words to describe it.

4.8   Age Groups

4.8.1   On average, visitor groups consisted of 2.8 people per visiting group (2.1 adults and 0.7 children per group). Of all the visiting groups, 181 (or 38% of visiting groups) included children up to 15 years old. The average visiting groups with children consisted of 2.1 adults and 1.7 children under 15 years of age.

4.8.2   Hunstanton reflects an older age profile, as the highest proportion of visitors fell within the 55-64 and over 65 years' categories, with 14% and 21% of the sample respectively,

followed by 45-54 years (13%) and 35-44 years and 25-34 years groups (each accounting for 11% of visiting groups). Female visitors accounted for 57% of all visitors and the remaining 43% were male.

| Table 15: Age and gender composition			
Age groups	Male	Female	Total
0-5	4%	6%	10%
6-10	4%	5%	9%
11-15	2%	3%	5%
16-24	3%	4%	6%
25-34	4%	6%	10%
35-44	4%	7%	11%
45-54	7%	7%	14%
55-64	5%	8%	13%
65+	9%	12%	21%
Total	42%	58%	100%
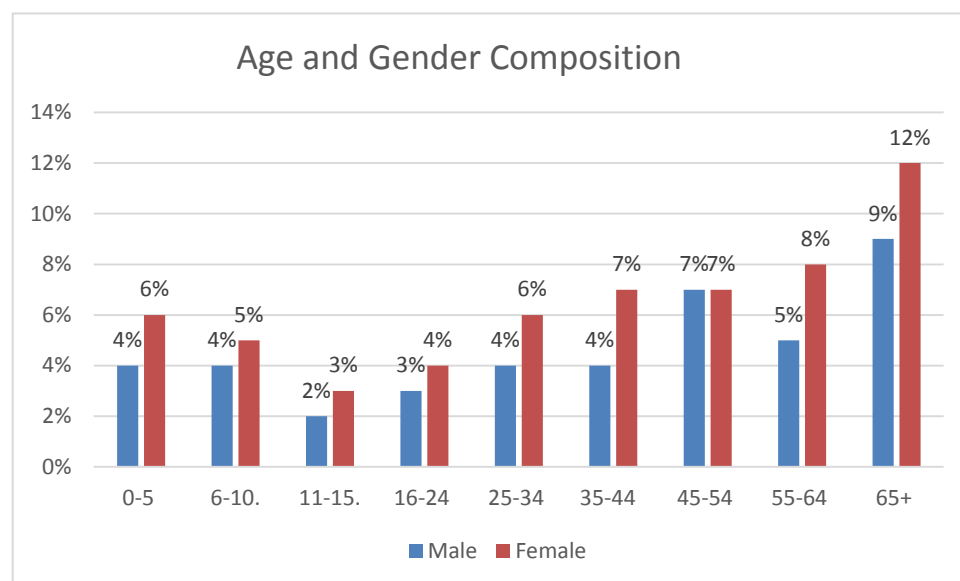
4.9 Socio-economic groups

4.9.1   The following table outlines the six socio-economic groups defined in the UK.

Table 16: Definitions of each socio-economic group

Grade	Socio-economic status	Occupation type	% of the UK
A	Upper middle class	Higher managerial, administrative or professional	4%
B	Middle class	Intermediate managerial, administrative or professional	23%
C1	Lower middle class	Supervisory or clerical, junior managerial, administrative or professional	29%
C2	Skilled working class	Skilled manual workers	21%
D	Working class	Semi and unskilled manual workers	15%
E	Welfare dependent	Those entirely dependent on the state long-term, through sickness, unemployment, old age; casual workers	8%

4.9.2   These classifications were used to assign each respondent with a social group, which was based on the occupation of the chief income earner for their household. Due to the sample sizes, we have grouped the above categories as AB, C1, C2 and DE.

4.9.3   The survey shows that most visitors to Hunstanton fell within the C1 (45%), which is well above the national average (29%), followed by DE (26%) and C2 (24%) socio-economic groups. Additionally, 5% of visitors were classified within the highest group (AB).
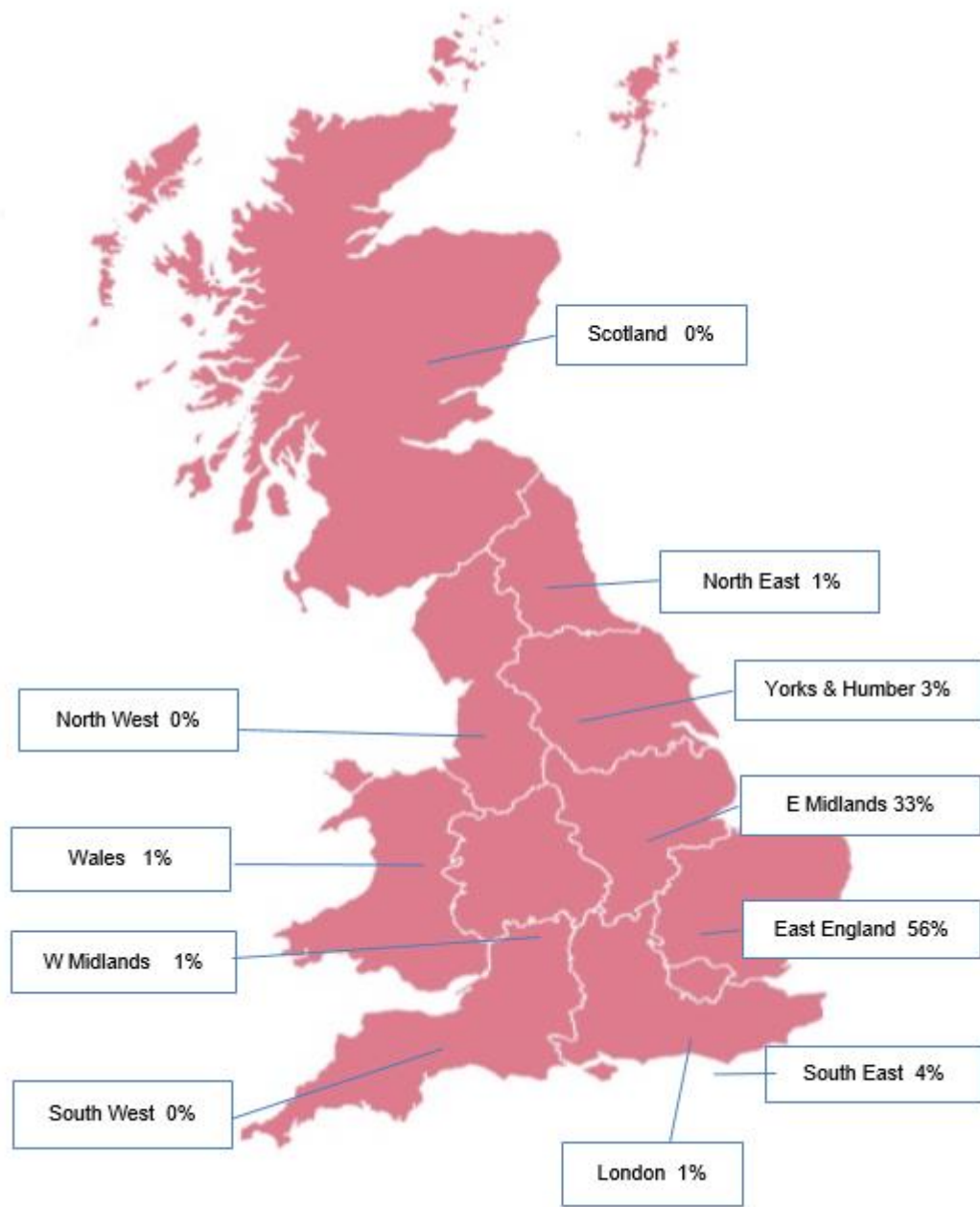
Socio-Economic Groups

Group	Percentage
AB	5%
C1	45%
C2	24%
DE	26%
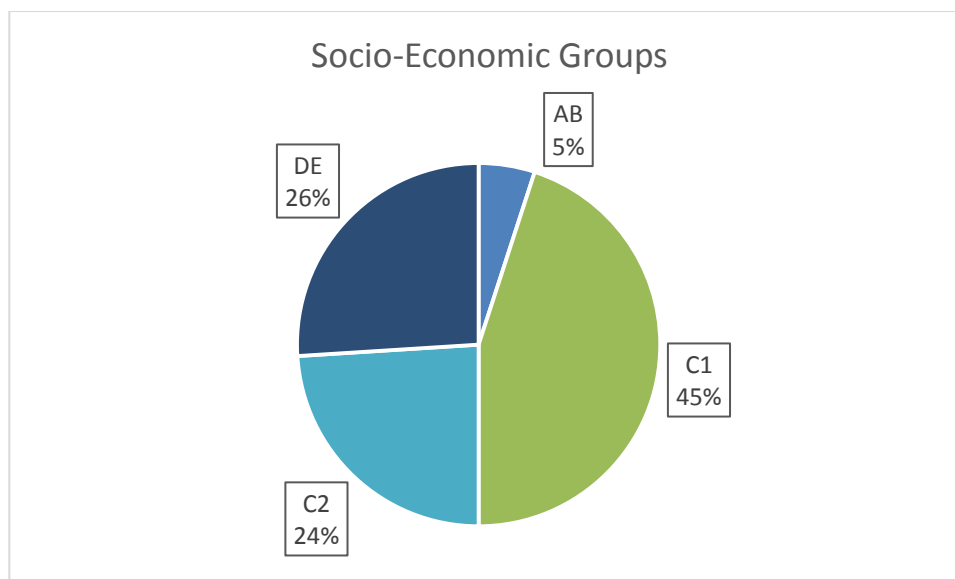
4.10   Origin

4.10.1   Most day trippers to Hunstanton came from the East of England (56%) and East Midland (33%). In terms of counties of origin, the largest proportion of visitors originated from Norfolk and Cambridgeshire (which made up 22% of the total sample each), followed by Northamptonshire (17%).

4.10.2   About 14% of all day trippers live 20 miles or closer to Hunstanton (postcode areas NR21, NR22, NR23, PE24, PE25, PE30, PE31, PE32, PE33, PE34, PE35 and PE36).

4.10.3   The following three maps show the distribution of visitors by region, postcode clusters and a 20-mile drive-time from Hunstanton town centre.

Table 17: County of origin	Percentage
Norfolk	22%
Cambridgeshire	22%
Northamptonshire	17%
Lincolnshire	7%
Leicestershire	5%
Bedfordshire	4%
Suffolk	4%
Essex	3%
Nottinghamshire	2%
Derbyshire	2%
Other	2%

Map 3: Origin of day visitors to Hunstanton by region of origin

Scotland 0%

North East 1%

Yorks & Humber 3%

North West 0%

E Midlands 33%

Wales 1%

East England 56%

W Midlands 1%

South East 4%

South West 0%

London 1%

Map 4: Origin of day visitors to Hunstanton by postcode clusters

Map 5 – 20-mile radius analysis

20-mile radius including postcode areas NR21, NR22, NR23, PE24, PE25, PE30, PE31, PE32, PE33, PE34, PE35 and PE36

5   REPORT OF FINDINGS: VISITOR OBSERVATIONS

5.1   Visitor count

5.1.1   A series of visitor count and observations took place at the Esplanade Gardens and Green in Hunstanton, as part of a Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) funded project called 'Parks for People'.

5.1.2   Visitor counting took place between 10:00 and 17:00 on the agreed dates. The charts below show the total count for each day, as well as each time of the day. These are split into 30-minute intervals.

5.1.3   The daily count chart shows that visitor numbers were higher at weekends and during the summer school holiday period.
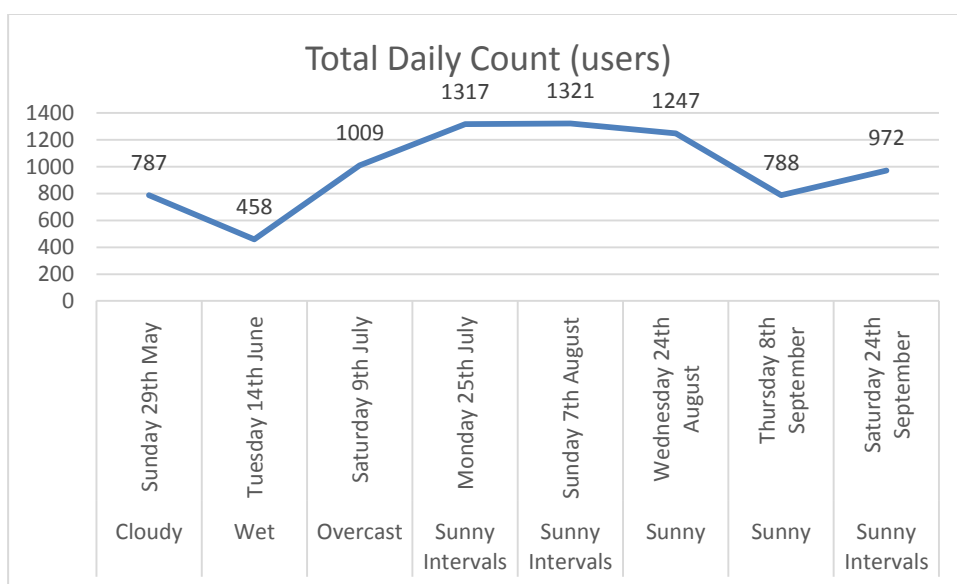
5.1.4   The time of the day also influenced the volume of visitors. Lunchtime (between 12:00 and 13:00) attracted the highest number of visitors, followed by early afternoon (14:00 to 15:00).
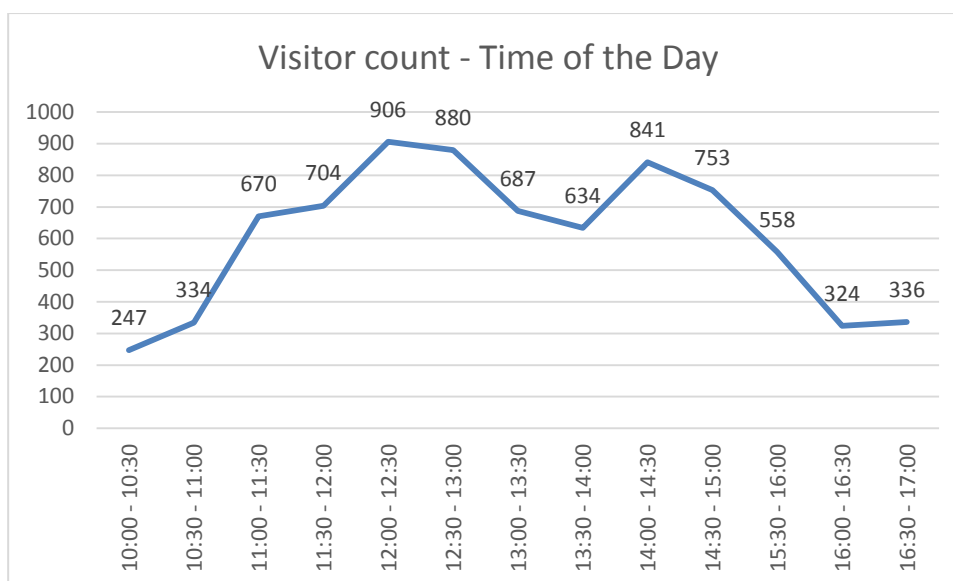
5.2   Age groups

5.2.1   Table 18 below shows both the daily and total count split into four life stages. The results of the observations would suggest that a greater proportion of users were middle-aged, accounting for over a third of users. See chart below.

Table 18: Daily count by life stage		Sunday 29th May	Tuesday 14th June	Saturday 9th July	Monday 25th July	Sunday 7th August	Wednesday 24th August	Thursday 8th September	Saturday 24th September	Total
Children	M	66	17	108	146	157	153	25	42	**714**
	F	55	18	73	174	160	137	29	62	**708**
Young adults	M	96	80	126	154	120	99	73	89	**837**
	F	102	61	108	199	181	151	67	115	**984**
Middle age	M	167	101	222	234	219	198	133	119	**1393**
	F	144	98	186	271	256	226	141	146	**1468**
Third age	M	77	45	99	73	110	121	151	202	**878**
	F	80	38	87	66	118	162	169	197	**917**
TOTAL Daily count		**787**	**458**	**1009**	**1317**	**1321**	**1247**	**788**	**972**	**7899**

Age Group Split

Third age 23%
Children 18%
Young adults 23%
Middle age 36%
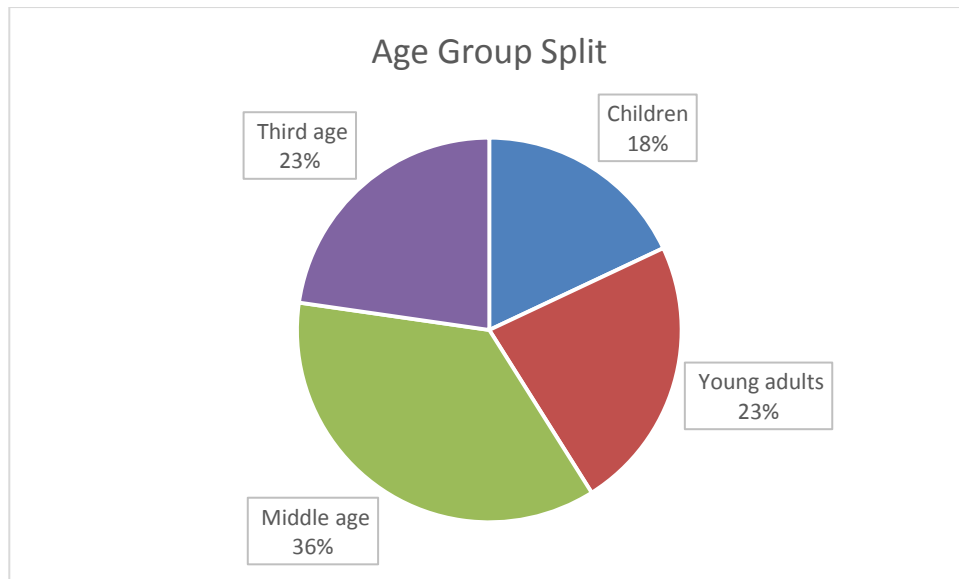
5.3 Ethnicity

5.3.1 As part of the observation process, each user was classified as either white (British) or BME (Black and Minority ethnic). One in every 43 users (or 2% of all users) was deemed to be of black ethnicity or of another minority ethnicity.

Ethnicity

BME 2%
White 98%
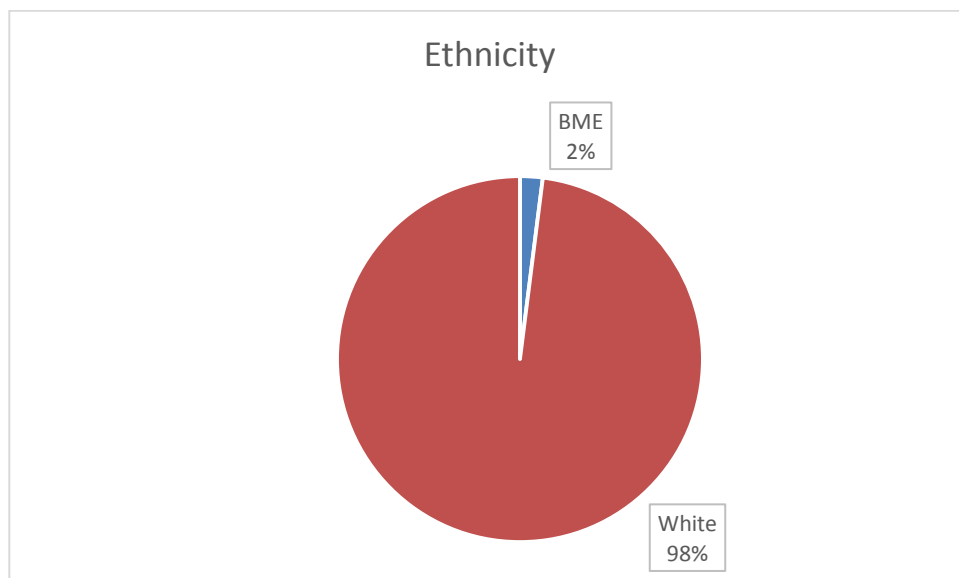
5.4 Disabilities

5.4.1 While monitoring disabilities, we were aware that we could only capture a proportion of disabilities, as not all are visually apparent. We accept that the results may be slightly

skewed for this reason. The results of the observations show that about one in 27 users had a disability. This represents 4% of all users

Disabilities

Yes
4%

No
96%
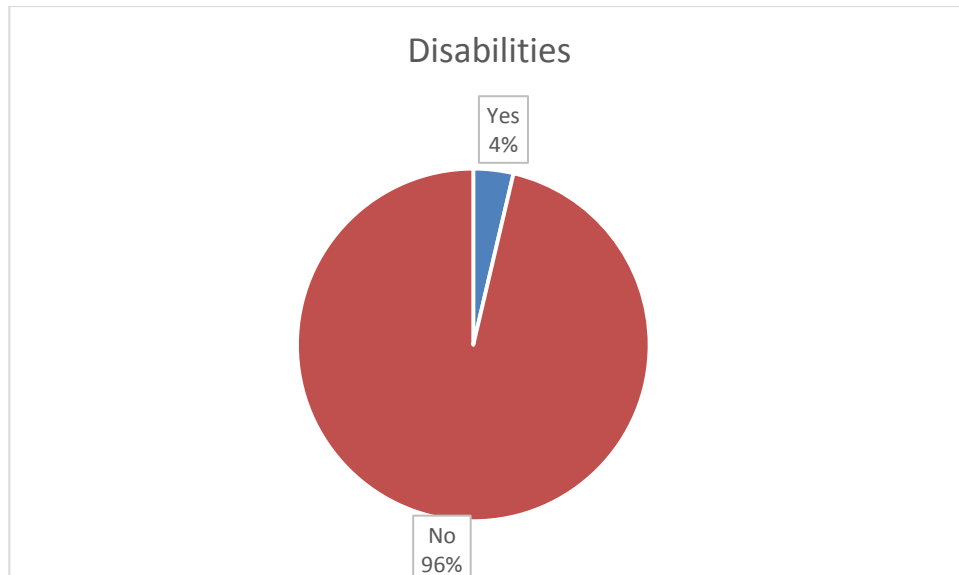
5.5   Gender

5.5.1   There were slightly more female users than male users, with a split of 52% and 48% respectively.

Gender split

Female
52%
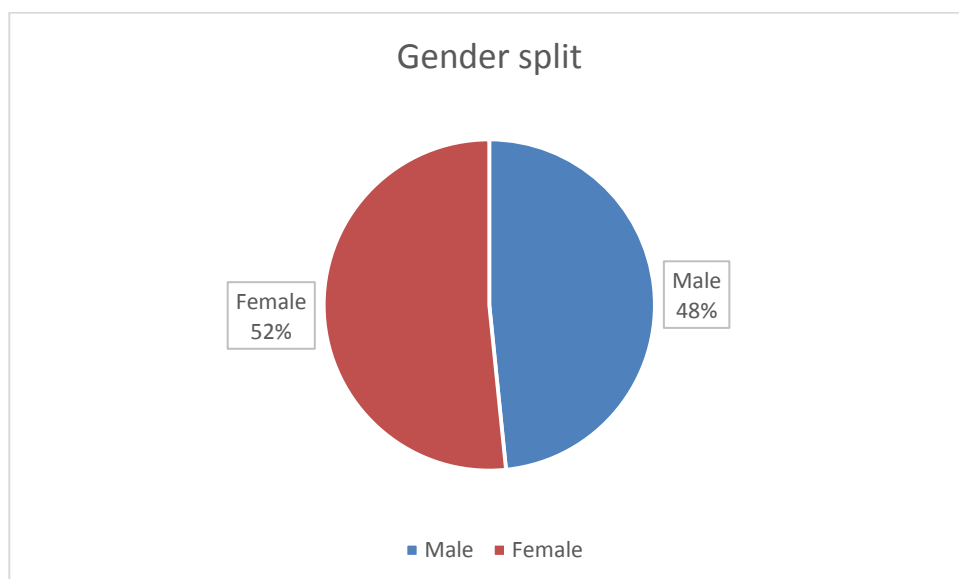
Male
48%

■ Male ■ Female

6.   APPENDIX - Observations – Instructions provided to fieldworkers

Visitor count and observation form

Time: Please use the time codes (right of form)

Visitor count: Please count each individual and record gender (M: male / F: female) and age group (Children / Young Adult / Middle Age / Third Age. Please use your initiative to classify each individual under one of the above categories. The most important thing is that you are consistent in your assessment.

Race: Classify each individual as either white (British) or BME (Black and Minority ethnic). As above, please try and be consistent in your judgement.

Disability: We are aware that we can only capture a proportion of people with disabilities, as not all disabilities are visually apparent. We accept that the results may be slightly skewed for this reason. Please use the 'Other remarks' section to make any comments regarding disability that will help us to understand this section fully.

Dogs: Count if present.

Weather: Use code to describe the weather conditions. Please be consistent in your judgement.

APPENDIX I – OBSERVATIONS FORM

Hunstanton - Esplanade Gardens and Green - Visitor Count and Observation Form															
Date:															

Time	Children		Young adults		Middle age		Third age		Race		Disability	Dog(s)	Weather	Other Remarks		
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	White	BME	Yes / No	Count if			**Time**	**Code**
(Code)				(Count)					(Select / tick one)		(Select one)	present	(Code)			
															10:00 - 10:30	1
															10:30 - 11:00	2
															11:00 - 11:30	3
															11:30 - 12:00	4
															12:00 - 12:30	5
															12:30 - 13:00	6
															13:00 - 13:30	7
															13:30 - 14:00	8
															14:00 - 14:30	9
															14:30 - 15:00	10
															15:30 - 16:00	11
															16:00 - 16:30	12
															16:30 - 17:00	13

Weather	Code
Wet	1
Cloudy (complete overacast)	2
Cloudy	3
Sunny intervals	4
Sunny	5
Cold	6
Warm	7

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