



# TOURISM

## Background

TM001 Tourism is defined as travel to another place within one's own country or to another country for leisure purposes. Travel is a relative right. It must be balanced with the right of all to a healthy and sustainable environment, economy and social life. (see RR201)

TM002 The Green Party is concerned about ecological, social and economic effects of tourism. We seek to ensure that:

- damage to the local and global environments is kept to a minimum;
- people are encouraged to take their holidays closer to home, reducing the amount of travel, particularly by air;
- the relationship between tourists and the communities they visit is an equitable one.

TM003 Tourism can have benefits. These can include inward investment and development in local communities. Such development must be sustainable. We encourage the development of facilities suitable for a variety of purposes throughout the year, to meet the needs of local people as well as tourists. We encourage more self-reliant local and regional economies, which are diverse and can meet more needs locally. They provide communities with a more secure economy, less dependent on temporary seasonal work. They reduce waste of resources and pollution of the environment.

TM004 A shift towards sustain-

able tourism requires information of tourists and businesses about the economic, social and environmental impacts of tourism. This is necessary to ensure that tourist activities and facilities are on a scale which matches the local community, are sympathetic to and do not pollute the environment, and are determined to a large extent by the local community.

## Policy aims

TM010 Tourism to consume fewer resources, particularly non-renewable resources. There must be a dramatic reduction in the intensive use of fossil fuel for travel, such as car and air travel (see EN510). Where resources such as water are scarce, particular economy in their use for tourism.

TM011 To discourage unsustainable and damaging tourist developments. A more open and democratic decision-making process to determine what developments should be built, and that they benefit local people as well as tourists.

TM012 To encourage involvement of tourists with the communities they are visiting. Separation of tourists from the local environment and people has led to a lack of perception and understanding, not least of issues addressed by these Green policies. We see positive integration of tourists and hosts in a sustainable way as the best way to achieve maximum benefit to both.

## Information and awareness

TM015 Raising awareness amongst tourists, tour operators, governments and international bodies about the environmental, social and economic effects of tourism is a vital first step in tackling the issues raised here. A rounded education for life includes consideration of such issues, at school and in higher education and government should make such issues clear in its handling of the tourist industry.

## *Tour operators and tourist industries*

TM020 Sustainability applies to both tourists and the businesses which depend on their trade. The destruction of tourism resources for short-term profit will deny the benefits to be gained from the access to and use of those resources in the future. At present most tour operators try to offer the cheapest package, without giving the buyer any advice on how they could reduce their impact on the place they are visiting and whether there are alternatives available which would be more sustainable and beneficial to the hosts.

TM021 To encourage awareness of these issues The Green Party would promote a Green tourism certification system, building on existing schemes but with more comprehensive criteria.

TM022 Certification for tour operators would take into account factors such as:

- a. the tour operator's membership of and status in independent environmental certi-

- fication schemes such as Green Globe;
- b. the extent to which tour documents inform tourists about the local culture and about the environmental/social issues which they might encounter, and advise them on how they could help to reduce their adverse environmental impact and to support the local economy of the places they are visiting;
- c. the information provided in brochures and tour handouts about more sustainable modes of transportation such as trains, buses and passenger ferries, particularly for distances of up to 500 miles;
- d. the information provided in tour documents about where and how to buy locally produced food and support smaller independent accommodation and food establishments;

TM023 Certification would also take into account the extent to which the tour operator:

- e. is aware of and actively respects local, regional, national and international rules established by treaties protecting fauna and flora;
- f. has procedures for undertaking a full environmental impact assessment before any new tourist development is created, to ensure that the chosen venue is environmentally, sociologically and anthropologically sufficiently robust to support the operation proposed without undue damage in these areas;
- g. has a policy of minimising use of the most environmentally unsustainable forms of long-distance transport (e.g. by travelling where feasible over land and sea rather than by air);

- h. adopts EMS (environmental management systems) to reduce any negative impact on the environment;
- i. seeks the active involvement of host communities in the decision-making process with regard to new and existing tourist developments, both in the UK and overseas;
- j. supports smaller independent local accommodation providers;
- k. recruits personnel locally for all levels of responsibility, and gives these personnel full work benefits applicable to other workers in the same country;
- l. protects and enhances the rights of workers employed in the tourist industry, including in other countries by insisting that overseas business partners adhere to acceptable standards in these areas.

TM024 The Green Party believes such a scheme should be a UK contribution to the development of international standards with other countries. The UK should consult other countries, particularly those which are destinations of UK tourists, and should propose a set of guidelines on sustainable tourism.

TM025 The term "eco-tourism" has been adopted by many tour operators, and can be misleading in terms of its real impact on the environment and local peoples. The desire to see unspoiled/traditional landscapes and cultures in fact can lead to damage to those very things. There are no adequate UK or international standards, which could guide tour operators and tourists as to what constitutes an "eco-tourist" holiday. The UK should promote the development of such standards, in consultation with other countries.

## Tourism in England and Wales

### *Tourism and planning*

TM030 The current planning process in England and Wales is fundamentally undemocratic and careless of local communities' needs. This can allow developments for tourism which have negative consequences for the locality in which they are sited and for the livelihoods of local people. However, properly informed, open, democratic decisions primarily by the local community about tourist developments are needed to secure sustainable benefit for both the tourists and the economy and lives of local people. New development should be assessed for its capacity to sustain year-round use, not just in the tourist season.

TM031 Local, unitary and structure plans, where they do not already do so, should include tourism. The periodic reviews should include a full environmental impact assessment of tourism in the area, which would include recommendations and targets to ensure the achievement and maintenance of environmental sustainability. This would be supplemented by wider strategic environmental assessments.

TM032 Regional planning should encourage the provision of sustainable leisure facilities, so that more people do not feel a need to travel abroad for their holidays.

### *Tourism and the economy*

TM040 Tourism is an important part of many local and regional economies in England and Wales. The Green Party seeks to ensure that the contribution made by

tourism is sustainable, and benefits the economy of the locality where it takes place (see EC911). We promote democratic economic planning and management. (see EC511)

TM041 Much employment in the tourist industry is low paid, casual and seasonal work, and in bad conditions. The Green Party would encourage more stable employment, not least by promoting dual use of tourism facilities on a year-round basis (see TM030). Employers should not be able to deprive casual or seasonal workers of statutory employment rights (see WR332 and WR342 - 349). We would strengthen enforcement to ensure that employers meet their statutory obligations.

TM042 The Green Party favours a general review of legislation related to the conduct of restaurant and fast food enterprises. The key objective would be to reduce the negative environmental impacts of such enterprises and improve employment in them. Local authorities should be empowered to encourage certain types of outlet, for example small cafés or restaurants owned and operated by local people, and to encourage all food outlets to source a significant proportion of their food supplies from local producers, to strengthen the local economy.

TM043 Some areas have many second homes/holiday flats, which are only occupied for a few weeks a year. This produces very limited benefit to the local economy. It is detrimental to the local communities, pushing house prices higher and pricing local people out of the market. The Green Party's policy of Land Value Tax has no reduction or exemption for properties which are left vacant. It will deter the own-

ership of second 'holiday' homes and encourage greater use of underused buildings. (see EC793)

## ***Tourism and transport***

TM050 Tourists visiting this country increase the load on the national transport system. This impact must be managed in an environmentally sustainable manner, and to ensure that benefits of changes to provision or infrastructure apply both to tourists and the host community. Some areas will attract large numbers of tourists, and much of this tourism will be seasonal. Additional public transport should be provided at such times to cater primarily for tourists so that these journeys can be made with less environmental impact and disruption to local travel.

TM051. The Green Party wishes to cut the use of fossil fuels by encouraging the use of public transport rather than private cars for tourism. Local authorities should help co-ordinate the provision of public transport to existing tourist facilities. Local restaurants, hotels, facilities and tourist attractions should be encouraged to give special offers to those visitors who use public transport, in exchange for promotion of their facilities through the transport operators and local authority. Such a scheme would be self-financing." and renumber accordingly.

TM052 Similarly, new tourist developments must be subject to an environmental impact assessment including the number of new visitors likely. Where development bringing a significant increase in numbers of visitors is accepted, the developers must work with public transport providers and the local authority to ensure sufficient additional public transport

is provided.

TM053 The Green Party encourages the use of environmentally sustainable modes of transport, as set out in the hierarchy of modes in our transport policy (see TR030). Facilities for walking, cycling, riding and provision of public transport help tourism to benefit both tourists and residents. We would empower local authorities to give grants to small and medium sized tourism enterprises to improve significantly their facilities for cyclists or links with public transport provision.

TM054 Canals and other waterways offer sustainable opportunities for tourism with limited consumption of resources. We encourage the use of renewable energy and sustainable fuels for waterborne transport (see EN302). Canals, rivers and waterways used for tourism need to be managed to ensure minimum disruption to the local ecology by tourist activities there. Speed restrictions on motorised craft must be enforced.

## ***Tourism, our natural and cultural heritage, and the environment***

TM060 Our country's natural and cultural heritage attracts tourists. We need to ensure tourism supports the maintenance of that heritage, rather than damaging it through excess. A rich natural heritage, managed properly, can be enjoyed by tourists and local people in environmentally sensitive ways.

TM061 Areas and sites which have come under severe pressure from tourist activities would be designated for absolute protection from further degradation. Local authorities should have respons-

ibility for enforcement, and legal penalties would fall upon both individuals and corporate bodies responsible for damage. Local authorities, non-governmental organisations and the public would be consulted about the designation of such sites. Such designation would provide added protection for vulnerable sites. Sensitive natural habitats such as in the Lake District and Snowdonia require protection. The Green Party also promotes a general policy of conservation and protection for all our countryside for enjoyment by tourists and local people. (see CY501 - CY503 and CY550 and CY580)

TM062 Certain leisure pursuits which are resource intensive, such as motor boating, helicopter and small aircraft pleasure flights, have greater impact on the environment. Local authorities should be empowered to ban these activities from specific locations in which they are inappropriate. The costs of such activities to participants should reflect their impact upon the environment.

TM063 Golf course proliferation in Britain is unsustainable due to its varied environmental impacts. Further development would be discouraged and regulations would be placed upon existing golf courses requiring them to implement course management practices consistent with environmental sustainability.

TM064 Caravan and camping sites can help encourage tourists to spend more leisure time in this country. Larger sites should be strictly monitored by local authorities to ensure environmentally responsible disposal of waste, minimum maintenance standards for health and safety and responsible use of the local environment.

TM065 Physical deterioration of historic buildings and artefacts can also be a major problem, whether due to pollution or excessive contact with tourism. But "historic" tourism can provide income to support the restoration and maintenance of historic buildings and may stimulate the conversion of other old buildings into tourist accommodation. The Green Party would support this, subject to safeguards for the buildings and surrounding area. Local authorities should preserve, promote and maintain local cultural treasures of all kinds in co-operation with locally based non-governmental organisations.

TM066 Those local authorities covering areas attracting significant numbers of tourists should maintain a Tourism Consultative Committee, to involve local businesses, people and community organisations as a specialised advisory body to recommend policy improvements, based on principles of sustainability.

## **Policies on International Tourism**

TM070 While Green policies for tourism will vary to achieve similar objectives in diverse local circumstances, all are advocated on a basis of equity. Where we favour a particular policy at home, we think it only fair reasonable that other countries should be able to do likewise, rather than being exploited as a result of disparities in economic power. Our policies for international tourism recognise that principle, and seek to ensure that policies we recommend in England and Wales are respected by UK tour operators etc when implemented in other countries.

## ***International tourism and transport***

TM075 There has been a rapid increase in international tourism and consequent journeys made using modes of transport dependent on fossil fuels, most significantly air travel. This is resulting in ever growing emissions of greenhouse gases. This is leading to dramatic and potentially devastating climate change.

TM076 The Green Party wishes to reduce drastically the amount of travelling that takes place for tourist purposes, and would do so with the policies set out in the air transport section of our transport policy. Rather than travelling by air, we encourage people to travel overland and by sea. The UK should press governments to ease visa restrictions for people travelling through their country and improve co-operation between countries to develop international ticketing arrangements.

TM077 Our policies to change the nature of work would give people more leisure time to enable them to make journeys by more environmentally friendly means, and to reap the benefits of an enriched travelling experience. Our policies to improve people's quality of life would reduce the desire to travel frequently to escape life at home.

## ***International tourism and the economy***

TM080 International tourism is a "high value" industry, offering comparatively large revenues and profits. However, those are usually channelled back to the tour operators, airlines and large organisations, often based in richer countries, rather than benefiting

the local economies of the countries hosting the tourists. Imports of food, furniture, other goods and services, and personnel are at the expense of the local economy. Prices for goods and services are often pushed up by tourists' demand for them, to the detriment of meeting local requirements. The Green Party supports countries and communities seeking to require local purchasing, and the development of local industries to meet demand.

TM081 Where tourism developments by overseas companies prove unsustainable, host local communities will need to work together to enable them to reclaim disused tourist facilities and complexes for use by the local population, by means of renovation work, or, where this is not possible, demolition and rebuilding. Multi-use developments should be encouraged, so that they can better meet the needs of local people and tourists together. The Green Party supports countries and communities seeking to control development in these ways. International tourism and the environment

TM090 International tourism depends on the attractiveness of the destination's resources to its visitors whether those are natural resources, such as beautiful scenery and wildlife, or human-made resources, such as historic buildings and ancient sites. The environment of faunal and floral species which are locally fragile, rare or close to extinction should be the object of scrupulous respect, in order to save the existence of such populations and their habitats as much as possible. These precautions should apply to wildlife of all kinds. Protection and conservation of historic buildings and sites must be fully respected.

Consideration needs to be given to the architectural planning of tourist facilities by using building styles and materials in harmony with the natural and existing built environment.

TM091 UK and international guidelines for the tourist industry (see TM020ff) should be fully respected when the UK is making loans of money to countries to develop their tourist provision, or providing assistance to UK tour operators.

### ***International tourism and local cultures and peoples***

TM100 The Green Party condemns the forcible removal of people from their homelands to make way for tourist developments. Full respect must be paid to the cultural and spiritual environment of the hosts in the country visited, and all direct or indirect implications of the conservation of its heritage and traditions.

TM101 We recognise that cultural exchange between peoples can be a positive thing, provided that this is done in a responsible way. We support 'working holidays, cultural exchanges and longer term study or travel in a country, as a means to understand the culture of the places one is visiting.