

**Coastal Tourism in Yorkshire & The Humber:  
Has European Funding 2000-2006 Made a Difference?**

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## **Abstract**

The Yorkshire and Humber region in the north of England stretches from the North Sea coast almost to the west coast, covering 15,413 sq km and with a population of around five million people. The region is at the centre of the United Kingdom, and is very diverse, with a number of urban areas such as Sheffield, Leeds and Hull, smaller more dispersed settlements such as former mill towns and mining villages, and also large sparsely-inhabited rural areas with a considerable reliance on farming. The region includes parts of three National Parks.

Tourism is important economically, particularly for the North Yorkshire sub-region; Yorkshire Forward, the RDA, estimates that tourism is currently worth about £6.1 billion to the region. Tourism supports over 160,000 jobs and approximately 6,000 companies. The Yorkshire and Humber region accounts for 10% of England's tourist trips, 9% of nights and 8% of total spend.

Tourism is (with some exceptions) largely seasonal, taking place mainly between April and September. The main characteristics of coastal tourism have traditionally been long-stay, low-spend visits by domestic tourists in lower socio-economic groups, with a high volume of repeat business. In recent years this has been changing. The decline of seaside resorts in the late 20th century and the introduction of low-cost flights and package holidays abroad have deeply affected and changed the nature of competition in the sector. Low-cost flights introduced in recent years at Leeds-Bradford Airport have further placed further pressure on the sector, although there is now hope that this also will bring in European tourists from new market segments. Resorts such as Scarborough and Whitby are struggling to compete in the changing marketplace by attempting to broaden and improve their tourism offer, linking to the rural hinterland and cultural/heritage themes, and to attract visitors from a higher socio-economic background and wider catchment areas than in previous decades.

This paper presents an analysis of the impact of European Structural Funds, largely the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), on the coastal tourism sector in Yorkshire and The Humber over the recent funding period (2000-2006). This work forms part of a regional case study prepared for a report on the impact of tourism on coastal areas from a regional development perspective, to be presented to the European Parliament in spring 2008. The records of ERDF match-funded projects have been analysed to determine their impact in terms of leverage of other public and private funding, and in terms of jobs created. The methodology also included a number of interviews with key stakeholders. The paper discusses the results of the programme and lessons learned, and then considers the prospects for tourism in the region in terms of Structural Funds over the next programming period (2007-2013), considering the implications for the sector.

# 1. Impacts of European Structural Funds on Coastal Tourism in Yorkshire and the Humber, UK

## 1.1. Overview

The Yorkshire and Humber region in the north of England stretches from the North Sea coast across the central Pennine Hills almost to the west coast, covering 15,413 sq km and with a population of around five million people (map 1). The region is at the centre of the United Kingdom, with good road, rail, air and sea connections. It is a very diverse region, ranging from large post-industrial cities such as Sheffield and Leeds to rural areas reliant on farming, from former textile mill towns in the Pennines to the ancient city of York and thriving ports such as Hull and Grimsby. Within Yorkshire are some of England's most beautiful landscapes; the region includes one National Park with a coastal boundary (the North York Moors, which includes 26 miles of coast), and parts of two other, inland National Parks (the Yorkshire Dales and the Peak District).

Tourism is important economically; Yorkshire Forward estimates that tourism contributed over €6 billion<sup>1</sup> to the economy of Yorkshire and Humber in 2003, and is currently worth about €8.8 billion.<sup>2</sup> Tourism supports over 160,000 jobs and approximately 6,000 companies. The Yorkshire and Humber region accounts for 10% of England's tourist trips, 9% of nights and 8% of total spend.<sup>3</sup> Most of the tourism is domestic, with only 1% of all visits being from overseas (but accounting for 10% of the spending). Leisure tourism is largely seasonal, taking place mainly between April and September and peaking in August each year.

Tourism in the region can be divided into three broad spatial sectors: the coast, the countryside, and the cities and historic towns. The coast runs from the seaside resorts of Cleethorpes in the south to Scarborough and Whitby in the north, offering a wide variety of coastal landscapes from the lowlands of the Holderness Plain to the Heritage Coast of Flamborough Head. The coast, with its spectacular cliffs, rocky shores, sandy beaches, resort towns and fishing villages, is the main focus for holiday tourism in the region. Parts of East Yorkshire are notable for coastal erosion; the coast can erode at a rate of 1.5-2 metres per year in some areas.<sup>4</sup>

The seaside resorts developed largely, as elsewhere in the United Kingdom, in the 19<sup>th</sup> century when the advent of the railways opened up mass tourism to the working classes from industrial areas in the hinterland (Walton 2000; Beckerson and Walton 2005). Hence the main characteristics of coastal tourism in this region have traditionally been long-stay, low-spend visits by domestic tourists in lower socio-economic groups, with a high volume of repeat business. In recent years this has been changing. The decline of seaside resorts in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century and the introduction of low-cost flights and package holidays abroad have deeply affected and changed the nature of competition in the sector. The low-cost flights introduced in recent years at Leeds-Bradford Airport by carriers such as Jet2, Ryanair and FlyBe have

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<sup>1</sup> Values in Euros (€) throughout this document have been converted by using the nominal unadjusted GOYH EUSF ERDF database rate of £1=€1.44

<sup>2</sup> Yorkshire Forward (2005), *A Strategic Framework for the Visitor Economy*; current estimate from Yorkshire Tourist Board.

<sup>3</sup> Yorkshire Forward (2005), *A Strategic Framework for the Visitor Economy*; Yorkshire Tourist Board (2006), *Tourism Education Pack 2006*.

<sup>4</sup> East Riding of Yorkshire Council (2005), *The 'Roll Back' of Residential and Agricultural Dwellings at Risk from Coastal Erosion in the East Riding of Yorkshire*.

further placed further pressure on the sector, but there is now hope that this also will bring in European tourists from new market segments.<sup>5</sup> For now, with a net imbalance in the region's visitor economy, resorts such as Scarborough and Whitby struggle to compete by attempting to broaden and improve their tourism offer, linking to the rural hinterland and cultural/heritage themes, to attract visitors from a higher socio-economic background and wider catchment areas rather than their traditional regional working class markets.

Tourism is extremely important to the region's economy, particularly for the North Yorkshire sub-region. The top tourism destination is the ancient city of York, which attracts around four million visitors a year. Research has shown that over a third of these tourists also go on to visit other parts of Yorkshire during their stay; Harrogate, the Yorkshire coast, and the countryside were the most popular in 2005-6.<sup>6</sup> Coastal and inland tourism are often interlinked, as visitors to the coast frequently also make day trips to destinations such as York.

### Regional Agencies

Tourism in the region is promoted and supported by the Yorkshire Tourist Board, which has recently produced a new tourism marketing strategy,<sup>7</sup> and instituted a Sustainable Tourism Think Tank.<sup>8</sup> The strategic responsibility for regional tourism support lies with the Regional Development Agency, Yorkshire Forward, which has set the tourism sector within the context of the Regional Economic Strategy (RES) for 2006-2015, and works in partnership with the region's local authorities and other bodies such as the national parks. According to the Regional Economic Strategy, "*Tourism is already a significant contributor to the regional economy but has the potential to be much more so. It reflects the totality of what Yorkshire and The Humber has to offer, bringing together the rich heritage of which the region is proud, its outstanding landscape, the diversity of its people, and a wealth of rural and urban towns and cities [...] Activity will be focused on delivering a widely owned plan for tourism [the strategic framework] that brings together strategic priorities, evidence, actions and delivery. Strategic priorities for tourism include quality, sustainability, good intelligence and innovation. A far sighted approach will be adopted that takes account of how issues like climate change will affect tourism*".<sup>9</sup> Objective 6 in the RES emphasises the renaissance approach to transforming cities, towns, and rural areas. Tourism interventions were embedded across the RES, in some cases as interventions in a sector in its own right. The Single Programming Document of the Objective 2 2000-2006 Programme was based on the six objectives of the RES, ensuring a good strategic fit with Yorkshire Forward's priorities.

The Yorkshire and Humber Regional and Spatial Strategy (RSS) dovetails with the RES to provide overall strategic direction for the region.<sup>10</sup> Tourism is identified as one of the key sectors that should be supported in plans, strategies and investment decisions in the region. The RSS recognises that with climate change, the climate in the region will get warmer, with winters becoming wetter and summers drier, although extreme events such as floods will become more frequent and the rate of coastal erosion is likely to increase; among the implications of climate change are opportunities for greater tourism potential. The RSS also

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<sup>5</sup> York Tourism Partnership (2007), *Key Facts on Tourism in York*.

<sup>6</sup> York Tourism Partnership (2007), *York Tourism Strategy and Action Plan – May 2007*.

<sup>7</sup> Yorkshire Tourist Board (2006), *Bold Vision, Bright Future: The Tourism Marketing Strategy for Yorkshire & Humber 2006–2010*.

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.yorkshiretouristboard.net/latest-news/news-items.asp?storyID=1190796615>

<sup>9</sup> Yorkshire Forward (2006), *The Regional Economic Strategy for Yorkshire & Humber 2006-2015*.

<sup>10</sup> Government Office for Yorkshire and The Humber (2007), *The Yorkshire and Humber Plan. The Draft Revised Regional Spatial Strategy Incorporating the Secretary of State's Proposed Changes*.

acknowledges the high degree of deprivation in some coastal areas, and demographic changes including losses of younger age groups and in-migration of older, often lower income groups. The Strategy recommends *inter alia* enhancing the tourism offer of Cleethorpes and developing tourism at Scarborough and Bridlington in particular. It identifies improving “the public realm and quality of the built environment of coastal resorts and the coast’s natural environment as the basis for economic diversification and regeneration”, and highlights the importance of “upgrading tourism facilities in ways which promote higher value activity, reduce seasonality and support urban regeneration”.

The RES provides the overall direction for tourism, and this is further developed by the region’s *Strategic Framework for the Visitor Economy*,<sup>11</sup> which includes the aspirational target of increasing the value of tourism in the region to €8.5 billion by 2010. The Strategic Framework also identifies seven Priorities, with subsequent objectives and actions, which will contribute towards achieving the growth target: Sustainable Tourism; Innovation and Product Development; Quality and Quality of Place; Business Development and Skills; the Information Base and Market Intelligence; Visitor Information; and Marketing.

### National Government

At a national level, the main government departments that are directly related to the context of coastal areas and this study are:

- Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), which has a responsibility for tourism and heritage tourism (an area which is significant to many coastal towns and traditional seaside resorts where tourism is the dominant industry).
- Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), which has responsibilities for flood and coastal erosion risk in England, together with responsibility for implementing the Government’s policy on the spatial planning system for the sea and coast. The Government intends, through the introduction of a Marine Bill, to rationalise the spatial planning system, as currently there are a number of different policies and decision-making structures for coastal areas.
- Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG), which has a range of policies that affect coastal as well as inland towns, such as its neighbourhood renewal, housing and enterprise programmes.
- Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (BERR), which has lead responsibility for the Regional Development Agencies (RDAs); these in turn are responsible for economic development and regeneration within their regions, including coastal towns, and have a statutory responsibility for developing regional tourism strategies. Additionally, for the 2007-2013 period RDAs have taken over responsibility from European Secretariats in Regional Government Offices for the management and delivery of of English regional Structural Fund Programmes. Since 2003 strategic responsibility for regional tourism has been devolved by Government to the nine Regional Development Agencies in England.
- In 2003, the former British Tourist Authority and the English Tourism Council were combined into a single new organisation called VisitBritain. Amongst the functions of

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<sup>11</sup> Yorkshire Forward (2005), *A Strategic Framework for the Visitor Economy*.

VisitBritain is the marketing of England to both United Kingdom and international visitors.

The United Kingdom government has no specific policy framework or initiatives for coastal towns or coastal communities, based upon the premise that coastal towns are too diverse to warrant such an approach. A recent report to the House of Commons Communities and Local Government Committee (House of Commons 2007) has identified that a 'one size fits all' approach to coastal towns would be inappropriate, given this diversity. None of the policies and strategies at regional and sub-regional level focus specifically on coastal tourism, but rather on the whole tourism offer.

### Local Government

Finally, at a local level Local Authorities (Councils) have a responsibility for developing local tourism strategies and plans. In the case of the Yorkshire and Humber region there are five coastal Local Authorities<sup>12</sup> that are examined in this chapter:

- Scarborough Borough Council (includes Whitby and Filey, in North Yorkshire);
- North Yorkshire County Council, which is the top-tier strategic authority in North Yorkshire;
- Hull City Council;
- East Riding County Council (includes Bridlington);
- North Lincolnshire Council;
- North East Lincolnshire Council (includes Cleethorpes and Grimsby).

### ***1.2. Quality of the partnership in the programming and implementation phases***

For 2000-2006 most coastal parts of these Local Authorities had core Objective 2 funding, with the exception of N Lincolnshire and parts of NE Lincolnshire (excluding Grimsby and Cleethorpes), which were classed as transitional areas in receipt of Objective 2 in 2000-2004 (map 2).

The 2000-2006 Yorkshire and Humber Objective 2 programme is a near-€1.5 billion investment programme which is supporting business growth and entrepreneurship, connecting people to opportunities, and funding physical infrastructure developments that promote economic development, with a contribution of almost €504 million of European Structural Funds alongside United Kingdom public and private sector sources. The programme has two business support priorities (Priority 1 and Priority 2), a community-led economic and social renewal priority (Priority 3), a capital investment priority (Priority 4), and a venture capital fund priority (Priority 5).

Tourism has not been the prime focus of the Yorkshire and Humber Objective 2 2000-2006 programme, and thus does not appear as a stand-alone priority within the programme. However, a number of measures within priorities are relevant directly or indirectly to the support of tourism activity in coastal areas in the region. The most direct assistance to tourism-related initiatives has been within Priority 4, which is targeted also to a number of coastal areas. Measure 4.4, 'Supporting the development of the region's locational assets' (a revenue measure), which aims to maximise the benefits of major investments in the Humber

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<sup>12</sup> These are located in two sub-regions : North Yorkshire and Humber.

Trade Zone and other key locations, is of particular relevance. Eligible activities under this measure include assisting design competitions, establishing and developing business associations, and assistance for marketing and long-term visitor strategies to increase spend and lengthen the tourism season.

A number of measures were targeted at coastal areas but not directly at tourism, such as 'Capturing the benefits of the Humber Trade Zone for the region (Measure 4.1)', an initiative aimed at developing key employment locations in the Humber area (including the estuary) by improving sites and site access, supporting the reclamation of derelict and contaminated sites and refurbishment of derelict and under-used premises, thereby creating new jobs by providing appropriate sites for new investment and business expansion. Similarly Measure 4.2, 'Key employment locations' (a capital measure), is targeted at key urban areas, market towns and coastal areas, and aims to provide support in improving the performance of the development of business space, leading to the creation of high-quality jobs.

A number of other relevant measures in the programme<sup>13</sup> within the business support priorities, whilst not directly targeted at tourism and coastal areas, were available and relevant to supporting tourism activity development in the region, for example:

- The development of new customers and new markets (Measure 2.1);
- Helping businesses adapt to the demands of new product and process innovation (Measure 2.2).

Partnership structures in the Objective 2 Yorkshire and Humber programming reflected to a large degree the priorities and measures architecture of the programme, and policies and strategies at regional and sub-regional level that do not focus specifically on coastal tourism, but rather on the whole tourism offer. At the strategic level, there have been no partners that played an exclusive tourism sector role other than the Yorkshire Tourist Board which was not part of the Objective 2 Programme Monitoring Committee (PMC). Until 2005, there were no significant formal tourism partnerships at a sub-regional programming level. However, since acquiring statutory responsibility for tourism in the region, Yorkshire Forward has set up a number of Area Tourism Partnerships (sub-regional destination management organisations), which bring together the public and private sectors, particularly the local authorities and the national parks. Strategy and policy at a regional level is the remit of the RDA, a revamped Yorkshire Tourism Board is tasked with the marketing and promotion of the region as well as research and intelligence, and the sub-regional Area Tourism Partnerships are to address specific market challenges, opportunities and product development in each sub-region.

For example, the Moors and Coast Area Tourism Partnership, which covers an area including the North York Moors National Park, has produced a tourism strategy for the area that aims, amongst other things, to improve and integrate marketing of the area which is currently divided among many different organisations; coastal tourism is not treated as a separate facet of the sector within the strategy.<sup>14</sup> These newly created sub-regional tourism partnerships are at different levels of development, and it is still too early to evaluate their success or degree of participation in the 2000-2006 Objective 2 programming and role in the implementation of Structural Funds-supported projects.

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<sup>13</sup> It has not been possible to evaluate the relevance of Priority 5 to coastal tourism due to its complexity and lack of available data.

<sup>14</sup> Moors and Coast Area Tourism Partnership (2006), *Moors and Coast Tourism Strategy 2006-2009*.

Local authorities in coastal areas have usually played the greatest part in coastal tourism partnerships. In practice, heads of the European teams (European officers) or heads of regeneration, and not tourism officers, have represented their respective local authorities at formal meetings, although integration of services within local authorities assured the involvement of tourism officers in the design, development and implementation of tourism projects and plans.

Frequently local stakeholders formed partnerships to complement the work of local authorities, and were very often supported by the latter and technical assistance funds. For example, in the 2000-2006 Objective 2 Programme a Humber-wide Culture Group was established. Its membership included partners and stakeholders involved in culture, tourism, leisure, and sport. The Hull IDP co-ordinator was a key member of this group. Specific ERDF-funded projects were endorsed through various levels of partnership structures, which at local level aligned to the Local Strategic Partnerships. For large-scale local Master Plan projects, the best approaches were to consult local communities at an early stage and throughout the conceptual development of the project. For example, at the request of GOYH, the Priority 4 Team (Key Employment Locations) worked on the basis of local consultation, and all Hull city centre IDP projects were endorsed at community level. Elsewhere, a failure to respond to local community aspirations resulted in problems further into the project implementation phase. For example, in Whitby local residents rejected part of the concept for the proposed ERDF-funded marina and environs redevelopment as put forward by Scarborough Borough Council, on the basis that this would alter significantly the appearance of the area and did not match local aspirations.

At the local level, the structures of delivery partnerships in coastal tourism projects vary also, and are greatly dependent on the urban or rural contexts. Due to significant market failure, regeneration, including in tourism destinations, was mostly funded by the public sector. A variety of partnership vehicles were used throughout the programme with differing legal status and objectives although none of these had tourism as the main focus of activity. In the case of urban coastal settlements, most often tourism project partnerships are led by local authorities, sometimes in partnership with newly established Urban Regeneration Companies (URCs) tasked with progressing and delivering Master Plans. URCs' objectives and legal status were well defined and stood as the most structured partnership framework put in place. The prime focus of these Master Plans is physical regeneration and renaissance, to assist the transformation of deprived localities into more competitive areas in terms of job creation, attracting inward investment and economic growth. Sometimes, however, where relevant, tourism was part of these wider plans, and attracted significant investment that it would otherwise not have had. A good example is Hull Citybuild. Following a successful bid for Urban Regeneration Company status in 2002, Hull Citybuild was established to create and deliver a dynamic and coherent physical regeneration strategy for the city's future. The company's area of operation falls into two adjacent and distinct areas, the City Centre and West Hull, and the extent of the Urban Regeneration Area is localised and focused. Tourism was perceived as part of Hull's city centre Master Plan, which included consultation with the Environment Agency. In the case of rural coastal areas, such focused and intensive forms of interventions have not always been possible and partnerships have a tendency to be controlled more remotely by local authorities in charge of those rural areas.

Perhaps the partnership vehicle with the most coastal character built into it has been the Humber Forum, later replaced by the Humber Economic Partnership (HEP), which acts as the strategic partnership for sustainable economic development for the Hull and Humber Ports

City Region. The HEP covers the whole city region and includes leaders of both public and private sectors from both banks of the Humber whose aim is to create the sustainable growth and greater competitiveness of the economy of the area. This is one of the four sub-regional Strategic Partnerships covering the Yorkshire and Humber region, working with Yorkshire Forward (the Regional Development Agency), Government Office Yorkshire & Humber, the Yorkshire & Humber Assembly, and other key partners to provide leadership to enable the effective delivery of the Regional Economic Strategy and the Objective 2 programme. Similarly, of relevance to the coastal areas in the North Yorkshire sub-region the York and North Yorkshire Partnership Unit (YNYPU) was created as an independent unit by public sector partners across York and North Yorkshire to co-ordinate external funding across the sub-region, primarily Objective 2, 3, and SRB6. The YNYPU has been instrumental for project recipients often lacking in capacity to develop projects, such as tourism businesses, in promoting effective partnership working, advocating for the sub-region, assisting with advice on match funding, and general support and guidance for funding programmes.

Master planning involves intensive public consultation. The Integrated Development Plan (IDP) for Hull's city centre added value with ERDF resources by drawing wider stakeholder groups into the partnership. The IDPs were appraised by GOYH and approved by a regional partnership, the Programme Monitoring Committee. Additionally, the Local Authority organised a number of special events during the delivery phase, which created a dialogue with the general public to discuss the city centre developments. Events were well attended and created significant interest in the plans.

All ERDF-funded project applications undergo a gateway appraisal, which includes an appraisal of environmental criteria. These identified cross-cutting targets which are monitored by recipients and Government Office. This mechanism was not specific to coastal areas, but applied to the whole Objective 2 programme.

A number of challenges were identified in developing and sustaining partnerships:

- ❖ Partnership working is resource-intensive, and will not function without strong public sector support, in particular from local authorities, and especially in areas of high deprivation, low connectivity and local economies experiencing market failure and low levels of collective aspiration.
- ❖ It is often very difficult to engage the private sector, with differences in approaches and ultimate goals being the main causes identified for this. The best examples of successful collaboration relied on clear and shared visions, well prepared and thought-through plans, and focused public sector investment for a decisive delivery. There have been some good examples of collaboration, as for example in Hull, where the St. Stephen's development and the Paragon Interchange were financed through a public/private partnership. Additionally a hotel on the east side of the River Hull and The Deep have been partly financed with ERDF and private sector funds. Often, rather than by direct collaboration on specific projects, private sector finance was leveraged in parallel to public sector investments by generating interest and realisation of opportunities.
- ❖ Often partnerships are too focused on drawing down the funds, and do not employ sufficient resources to track delivery and performance and outcomes.

- ❖ Alignment of partnership processes at all levels is required in order to reduce delays in applications coming forward.
- ❖ The UK is characterised by a high degree of institutional change and quango building. Partnerships need a considerable time before they develop and become effective. Constantly changing institutional structures hinder this process.

Key sections of the draft Operational Plan for 2007-2013<sup>15</sup> have examined ‘what works’ and ‘key lessons learned’ from previous experience, and identify ways of effective partnership in Structural Fund programmes from the point of view of the managing authority:

- Aligning Structural Fund programmes with regional strategic objectives;
- Using a portfolio approach that allows for a range of interventions with an emphasis on less risk (ensuring a stronger adhesion to the N+2 targets and their delivery), supplemented by modest investment in high-risk high-return projects’
- The need to shift operations to a commissioning-type activity to achieve programme objectives rather than an open-bidding process.

### ***1.3. The financial leverage effect***

Preparations for the European 2007-2013 programme delivery are still underway. To date implementation has not yet commenced, and it is difficult to comment on future take-up for coastal tourism projects and the leverage effect of structural funding. The managing authority (Yorkshire Forward) is aligning the priorities of the Operational Programme with those of the RES, as well as the EU’s Lisbon Agenda. Tourism is not perceived at this stage as being central to the discussion around the new Operational Programme, and expectations would be for any future tourism project proposals under the 2007-2013 programme to deliver high end policy objectives on growth and jobs and the knowledge economy.

For the 2000-2006 programme, there have been a number of tourism-related projects that were financed mostly through ERDF. As tourism as such is not identified either as a priority or within GOYH’s management information systems database, it has been very difficult to extract data on tourism projects in the region. Researchers interviewed key GOYH senior civil servants and examined the entire 2000-2006 Compendium of Projects database to try to identify individual projects with a tourism character, and thereafter extracted full details for those individually. Results were then compiled in an attempt to separate coastal from non-coastal projects, and to do this the assumption used was the project sponsor and its respective classification as coastal or non-coastal. This approach is limited by the following factors:

- Project sponsors are the main point of contact for a particular project, and it is often difficult to quantify the degree of participation of other participants and the geographic areas covered by projects.
- In many instances it is difficult to make accurate judgements on the character and content of a project by looking at the Compendium of Projects alone, as project titles may be fairly limited descriptions. For example, physical regeneration of urban centres

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<sup>15</sup> Yorkshire Forward (2007).

might not be classed as tourism projects, but in many cases will have strong links with improving the attractiveness and might contribute towards the visitor's experience. It was only when a local authority identified such projects as part of their tourism strategy that projects contributing indirectly to tourism were counted in the analysis.

- Relying on the 'collective memory' of projects that took place inevitably means that most often projects recollected tend to be the larger ones, whilst some projects that were smaller in significance or coverage may be forgotten.
- Projects were limited to being sponsored through ERDF, and any ESF-sponsored projects were not identified through this process. Nevertheless, this was judged a reasonable limitation.

For these reasons results discussed here are a best approximation of reality, and reflect the most important projects in the area of tourism.

In total, as illustrated in Table 4 (Annex), 55 projects were surveyed in the Objective 2 programme that were deemed to be in the tourism sector within the Yorkshire and Humber, accounting for approximately 8% of the 2000-2006 Objective 2 programme and representing a total value exceeding €133 million invested. Of those, as illustrated in Table 5 (Annex), 26 were on the coast, representing approximately 68% of the total ERDF contribution towards tourism projects in the Objective 2 programme, with a total value of funds invested exceeding €6 million. The average rate of co-financing of coastal tourism projects in the programme was approximately 27%, whilst private sector funds represented 23% (as opposed to 18% on average for tourism projects in the Objective 2 programme), and other public sector funds amounted to 50% of the total value of coastal projects in the region (Table 6, Annex).

Private sector co-financing contributions, whilst important, have been concentrated particularly in Measure 4.2 in support of the Hull city centre IDP, giving Hull the highest rate of private sector financial leverage on the region's coast, 38% (Table 6, Annex). The majority of those contributions (over €12m) were concentrated on the Hull 'East River Bank Tourism Catalyst' project. The purpose of this project was to develop the necessary infrastructure to support tourism growth in Hull and the sub-region by improving the public realm, signage and interpretation boards. Most of the private sector contributions were associated with the new three-star hotel that is part of this project. ERDF was used to support the abnormal costs of developing a difficult derelict waterfront site.

The second highest rate of private sector financial leverage was at Cleethorpes, NE Lincolnshire, a traditional seaside resort in decline. Over half of the ERDF funding for Cleethorpes (56%) went towards the Meridian Lakeside Arena project, a package of construction and environmental activity along the seafront. The main focus was the development of an existing arena to improve facilities, allowing it to hold larger and more complex events and to act as a catalyst for the planned transformation of the tourism offer. Other elements included investment in the Cleethorpes Light Railway, an extension to the existing Discovery Centre, the creation of a block of units for craft-related companies, and environmental improvements to the boating lake, together with private sector investment to improve the volume and quality of accommodation available for tourists. The aim of the project was to improve the connectivity of the various accommodation facilities and tourist attractions, and to extend the leisure tourist season by enabling events earlier and later in the year.

Other large projects funded by ERDF in NE Lincolnshire included a three-year comprehensive marketing plan which included the re-branding of Cleethorpes as a premier tourist destination and event provider for the east coast, and a separate marketing project focused on Cleethorpes. There was also a project to co-ordinate the production, management and staging of events in Cleethorpes. Together these projects accounted for around 31% of the ERDF spend. The remaining smaller ERDF-funded projects were business-focused grant schemes, providing business improvement and tourism business grants.

Attracting private sector funding in tourism projects has been difficult for most localities in the Objective 2 programme. Most often, eligible areas have suffered neglect, dereliction and deprivation which would not naturally associate them with tourism. Hull's success has been in that the IDP targeted the effort of intervention in a part of the city centre, the marina and waterfront areas, that was highly visible (central) and neglected, under-used and in parts derelict (i.e. where change would be most visible). Public confidence associated with the density of the investment, and high visibility and high profile projects such as The Deep, made it easier to attract private investors. Rural coastal areas have in comparison not had the same concentration of public resources, and unlike urban coastal centres they have not been as successful in attracting private finance (Table 6, Annex).

#### **1.4. The economic/social impact**

Coastal towns in Yorkshire have seen the decline of two key sectors: tourism and fishing. The cumulative effect has been a profound loss of employment with resulting social and economic deprivation. Some parts of coastal towns exhibit similar social problems to the worst inner-city areas, with pockets of acute deprivation illustrated by high unemployment (particularly long-term and youth), low levels of economic activity, low wage rates, low GDP per head and low levels of educational attainment. For example, some areas of Hull inner city and Scarborough have wards that are amongst the 10% most deprived super output areas (new index of multiple deprivation) in the country.<sup>16</sup> Equally an important issue for coastal areas is the demographic challenge facing them. Ageing populations (mostly retired) and poor youth retention are the major issues in British coastal areas. However, extensive study does not identify these problems as particular to coastal areas (as many of these are shared with rural areas), nor does it portray levels of deprivation as a particular issue associated with the coast.<sup>17</sup> Furthermore, tourism is still seen by some as a viable economic sector of activity for coastal towns, Beatty and Fothergill confirm that "*the seaside tourist industry is one that should be nurtured, not written-off as a lost cause*".

It is very difficult to assess the direct impact that Structural Funds have had in coastal areas, as a complex set of interrelated factors are at work, and studies on the issue and labour market data collected locally tend to be limited. The ERDF-funded tourism-related projects on the coast were forecast to accommodate over 250 jobs, and create 902 new ones (Table 5, Annex). Some areas are showing improvement in employment statistics as part of a longer-term trend, as for example Hull, where overall unemployment figures have been falling. The Nomis official labour market statistics for Hull suggest that between 1995 and 2005, 1,300 new tourism-related jobs have been created, and added to this a number of jobs have resulted from the capital development projects in the area. As the tourism product in Hull is improving, so is job creation in the area. However, a proportion of these new jobs are filled by

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<sup>16</sup> Yorkshire Forward (2006).

<sup>17</sup> Beatty and Fothergill (2003).

migrant workers from Central and Eastern Europe, whilst the City Council is trying to encourage bespoke training schemes for the under- and unemployed workforce in Hull to help them to take advantage of these job opportunities. Many of the new jobs filled by Hull residents remain low-skilled, low wage jobs, and the task at hand remains developing the skills base for the new tourism jobs. In many seaside towns in Yorkshire severe restructuring has meant that the impact of Structural Funds has still not generated sufficient change.

It is not possible to credit ERDF tourism interventions alone in coastal Yorkshire with the shift of labour markets. Often, new tourism jobs are not immediately and easily accessible for the under-employed or unemployed because of their low-skills set. In many instances, it is Government Departments and initiatives like Jobcentre Plus which are managing this problem. It is the joint impact of ERDF and other public sector investments on the future of local economies that is most worthy of mentioning in the context of evolving labour markets in seaside towns. For example, early in the program it was recognised that coastal locations also needed to diversify economic activity by bringing forward projects that broadened their economic base and invested in new employment sectors. Key areas of investment required included public sector pump-priming in business park developments, and the provision of sites and premises appropriate for local businesses. Office development was seen to facilitate growth in the commercial and financial services sectors and within market towns, and indeed in the HTZ, investment was targeted on environmental assets and ‘place-making’ activities. It is in these areas where ERDF has had a strong impact. Results are mixed; on the one hand some localities where traditional industries like fishing are still declining are struggling to re-invent themselves and to identify key growth sectors, and public policy is failing or at best succeeding in slowing down the decline, and perhaps Grimsby is a good example of an area that needs more sustained effort and attention from national and European policy-makers.<sup>18</sup> By contrast, sustained and long-term public intervention in some areas is showing promise in developing new sectors and identities, of which Scarborough’s encouragement of creative industries and Whitby’s heritage approach to regeneration are prime examples.

### ***1.5. The differentiation of tourism activities***

From the outset of programming tourism was approached with caution, as there had been a number of unsuccessful ventures in tourism projects in the 1994-1999 Objective 2 programming period that had difficulty in sustaining a viable operation once capital funding ran out, e.g. the National Centre for Popular Music, and the Earth Centre in South Yorkshire, and Grimsby’s Fishing Heritage Centre. Government Office was keen from the outset to encourage the following key principles:

- Projects had to demonstrate economic sustainability and viability;
- Project promoters were encouraged to respond to the nature of their competition by developing the quality of tourism products offered and responding to new market demands;
- Emphasis was put on realistic approaches and estimations of visitor forecasts, income generation etc;
- Over-reliance on the tourism economy and its subsequent decline had been a principal issue that the funds were set to address in coastal areas by encouraging diversification and innovation in the local economy and tourism offering.

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<sup>18</sup> ERBEDU (2005).

Whilst the tourism proposition has been an important part of coastal economies, for most it has been a declining sector and has seen significant neglect in investment, therefore offering a very practical challenge for basic infrastructure re-investment needs versus longer-term approaches. In practice, inevitably a number of projects looked at short-term business improvements such as improving the basic tourism infrastructure (hotel quality, basic utilities for tourists, booking systems etc). In many instances, however, the competition with other markets was a significant factor around which these projects were oriented, as it was felt that it was necessary to bring the underlying basic tourist provision on the coast into line with modern-day market requirements. An example of this approach has been the new hotel in Hull. Importantly, a number of other actions had a longer-term view and could be classified broadly as serving two principal aims: to improve development of theme-based and business tourism; and to diversify the economic base and invest in new areas of tourism activity. Both aspired to tap into new markets and to extend the tourism season by encouraging and sustaining activity throughout the calendar year. It is the latter that offers greater interest.

The theme-based approach has been exemplified by a number of coastal projects in Yorkshire and Humber. Perhaps one of the best examples has been Hull's focus on a heritage-themed approach towards urban renaissance and tourism development. Hull's past was rooted deeply in a strong maritime tradition and historic legacy, which led to a clustering of tourism projects linked to celebrating its heritage. For example, one of the projects benefiting from ERDF, the Wilberforce Initiative which refurbished Oriel Chambers and Wilberforce House in the Hull Museums Quarter, was developed as a lasting legacy of the bicentenary of the abolition of slave trade in the British Empire, and has been a success.<sup>19</sup> Most strikingly The Deep, explored in further depth as a case study in this report, was designed to be linked to Hull's maritime past whilst exploring new ways of developing much-needed links with education and communities within Hull and the Humber sub-region. Heritage themed approaches have been used to refurbish and restore historic architectural features and buildings, creating new landmark venues, as for example the new home for the city's Hull Truck Theatre,<sup>20</sup> as well as restoring thematic heritage by celebrating the achievements of the past. However, the key to success has not been in simply restoring buildings and places to their former appearances and glory, but in going a step beyond and linking these, often creatively, to new activities and the future of coastal towns.

In Hull, Structural Funds were used to connect a suite of tourism projects, strongly making use of the city's heritage to generate new interest and a new offering by establishing a critical mass of tourist activities, something upon which successive projects could build upon. Scarborough and Whitby are also good examples of using the heritage approach to revive the tourist offering, with Whitby being perhaps the most successful seaside town in the region in that respect. Whitby today is a well-preserved fishing town positioned on the slopes of the Esk estuary, rich in historical associations, with many old buildings along its steep and winding streets. Its economy was traditionally based on fishing, whaling and shipbuilding, and by 1790 Whitby was the seventh largest port in England. Later these industries steadily declined, and the town has long been tourism-dependent. Whitby's isolated location on the edge of the North York Moors has been an obstacle to diversification, and by the 1970s and

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<sup>19</sup> William Wilberforce, born in Hull, led the long and arduous campaign against the slave trade, which resulted in the Abolition Bill in 1807, a turning point in British history and the global slave trade.

<sup>20</sup> Established in 1971, Hull Truck is one of only six producing theatres in the Yorkshire region, providing a range of activities, and it has been nationally known throughout its history for pushing artistic boundaries in contemporary British theatre.

1980s the town was showing the effects of a short visitor season, low spend per head and a rather downmarket reputation. Through a long running programme of public investment in physical improvements over a prolonged period, Whitby's run-down image has been reversed and it has recovered its economic form. Whitby's success lies in public bodies, such as the Yorkshire Tourist Board, Borough and County Councils and English Heritage, taking a long-term approach in investing in heritage and rescuing and renovating hundreds of listed buildings over a 20-25 year period, as well as making environmental improvements. Today Whitby is a thriving coastal town with raised and very significant tourism profile.

Similarly, Scarborough, a maritime centre with shipbuilding and a 19<sup>th</sup>-century resort for the wealthy, and one of Britain's first seaside resorts, saw a great investment in architectural heritage and cultural assets during its heyday. However, in common with many seaside towns Scarborough's popularity as a resort waned in the latter half of the twentieth century, and its rather remote location made it difficult to attract new enterprise. In its strategy Scarborough Borough Council is supporting a sustained effort to invest in Scarborough's architectural heritage and its cultural assets. Whilst on the one hand attempting to tackle the deprivation and low levels of educational attainment, the Council and more recently Yorkshire Forward are investing substantially through the Scarborough Urban Renaissance initiative to transform the city. A cluster of initiatives and strategies have been devised and put into action to restore architectural assets such as Scarborough's Grand Hotel, to improve and reconnect the city's heritage (e.g. Rotunda Museum and Scarborough Marina), and to transform historic landmarks to create new areas of activity. In the case of the latter, Scarborough's historic Spa complex, is to be re-used as a conferencing centre with over €3.8m of investment so far and has successfully triggered over and estimated €6m of investment in nearby hotels.

A similar process has been taking place along the coast in Bridlington, where most of the ERDF funding (93%) has gone towards the refurbishment and redevelopment of Bridlington Spa, the flagship project for the Bridlington Regeneration Strategy. The Spa, a multi-purpose conference, events and entertainment centre located on the seafront, dates back to 1896, with two later rebuilds following fires. The aim of the project was to re-establish it both as a landmark building and as an icon for the town, thus developing its contribution to the local economy, and increasing the profile of Bridlington and its attractiveness as a location for investment. Bridlington Spa is thought to contribute around €6m to the local economy annually from the visitors it attracts; this figure is estimated to increase by around €1m as a result of the redevelopment (ERYC 2004b; 2006).

A recent report by English Heritage captures a few areas in which British coastal towns have shown progress with diversification tourism strategies, and describes this as a need for English seaside resorts to “[...] *to define a new visitor offer, which diversifies into areas such as culinary tourism and adventure tourism, and which competes on quality as well as price.*”<sup>21</sup> Diversification strategies, a form of growth strategy, involve a significant increase in performance objectives (usually tourist sales or market share) beyond past levels of performance. They are used to expand tourism activities often by entering new markets, through adding products and services to the existing provision. In Yorkshire and the Humber, coast conglomerate diversification<sup>22</sup> has been taking place through a significant investment into the cultural industries. This cultural branded tourism is well represented in Scarborough,

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<sup>21</sup> English Heritage (2007a).

<sup>22</sup> As opposed to concentric diversification, conglomerate diversification is a process that describes when new products unrelated to current technology, products or markets are introduced into new markets.

where long-term plans have been put in place to develop the Scarborough Cultural Quarter.<sup>23</sup> The project location is the former Wood End Museum, which incorporates artists' studios, offices and storage space, as well as exhibition facilities for the creative and media industries. Both phases of this project have seen over €7m invested from the ERDF, and apart from generating a renewed interest in the locality, the project is also set to bring over 100 full-time new jobs. This approach has also been reflected in Hull, and the investment in the new premises for the Hull Truck theatre is one example.

The natural and most importantly heritage assets found in coastal towns give them an advantage in the generation of creative industries, one of the United Kingdom's fastest growing sectors of the economy. It is believed that the very nature of coastal town is highly conducive to attracting a flexible creative workforce, and providing the supply-side conditions in which creative industries thrive. In turn, the presence of a critical mass of artists and creative activity helps attract new visitors to coastal areas. Effectively these new 'brands' enable coastal towns to move from traditional seaside resort roles to 'specialist roles'. It is still early to evaluate entirely the success of coastal tourism diversification strategies and the role that Structural Funds had in bringing these to the fore; however, evidence from coastal towns such as Whitby and Hull suggests that this has been a successful approach.

#### ***1.6. The sustainable development issue***

Whilst environmental principles of sustainability have been well embedded from the outset in the Objective 2 programme 2000-2006, and especially when linked to ERDF capital development projects, climate change provisions have not been emphasised as much. The Environmental Good Practice has been a cross-cutting theme since the beginning of the programmatic period 2000-2006 (previously referred to as Environmental Sustainability and revised following the mid-term evaluation), and has had a particular focus on capital development projects where a Capital Guidance document has been produced for Project sponsors, covering all aspects of capital project design and construction including requirement for conformity to BREEAM (Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method) standards. Environmental sustainability strategies also looked at initiatives aimed at reducing waste and pollution, as well as energy management best practice development. However, the Objective 2 programme did not deal directly with the issue of climate change, as a policy push in this direction has been far more recent in United Kingdom national policy.

In 2005, Yorkshire Forward published a Climate Change Action Plan (CCAP) for the region,<sup>24</sup> aiming to reduce emissions regionally and to adapt to the impacts of climate change following the United Kingdom Government's Climate Change Programme published in 2000. The CCAP sought a balanced approach based on the principles of mitigation (i.e. considering actions that reduce the factors that contribute towards climate change and thus alleviating its effects) and adaptation (i.e. taking the necessary steps to cope with the consequences of climate change). Tourism has been one of the areas seen to be likely to benefit from rising temperatures, with varying consequences for coastal areas. Most significantly, the Yorkshire and Humber Regional Spatial Strategy (drafted in October 2006, revised by the secretary of state in May 2007 and currently undergoing consultation) considers in depth climate change and its consequences, and spatial considerations for the coastal areas: "*Coastal erosion is likely to increase due to projected climate change and rising sea levels. This underlines the*

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<sup>23</sup> Part of the Scarborough Urban Renaissance programme

<sup>24</sup> Yorkshire Forward (2005).

*need for coastal planning authorities to adopt appropriate management strategies for the shoreline and inter-tidal areas, and to consider 'roll back' development limit policies where appropriate.”<sup>25</sup>*

In many cases tourism can also have implications for fragile parts of the region's environment, including international biodiversity sites such as those found in the North York Moors National Park, for example. There have been a number of policies, initiatives and proposals to reduce and avoid the adverse effects of high visitor numbers, whilst recognising the integrity of such sites in the local economy. A good example has been the North York Moors Sustainable Tourism Project (STP), a €1.7m project supported by ERDF, which was set up to develop and promote tourism across the area in a sustainable way that would ensure benefits for the local economy, the environment and local residents. One of the main parts of the project has been to encourage and enable visitors to explore the park by using more sustainable methods of transport (foot, bicycle, horseback etc), minimising reliance and usage of cars and the environmental footprint. The project, which ran from October 2002 to December 2004, also looked at improving and creating over 460 km of cycle routes (especially the Moor to Sea cycle route that connects the coastal park to Scarborough, Whitby and Pickering). A large part of the project was devoted to promoting the national park, the coastal area and more sustainable tourism approaches, and a new website was developed and launched. Perhaps the biggest success has been the setting up of networks dedicated to the STP project, and over 40 local businesses signed a Sustainable Tourism Commitment, the impact and influence of which extended beyond the end of the project.

Whilst the STP represents a good example of sustainable tourism adhering to the principles of mitigation, a number of projects took place on a principle of adaptation (i.e. adapting to changing climatic conditions and subsequent consequences). In the case of Scarborough, ERDF grants were used in the development of the Scarborough Marina (including a pontoon marina for yachts and leisure crafts) and a sea defence wall. The one-metre-high concrete sea wall was constructed to replace the original Victorian-era iron railings along Marine Drive in 2005, as part of a two-kilometre scheme designed to protect the resort, provide more adequate sea defences in view of rising sea levels and greater storm surges, and safeguard the historic 100-year-old Marine Drive which was at risk from heavy seas. The project met with a degree of controversy in 2004, with some residents forming a pressure group called 'Sons of Neptune', and lobbying against the project to preserve the sea front as it was and keep the views of the bays unhindered.

It is quite clear that climate change due to the global nature of the factors that interrelate and contribute towards it cannot be prevented or managed by one policy instrument alone or by actions within one state alone, but it rather represents a more holistic and global challenge. In that respect, coastal areas in Yorkshire are representative of the limitations that tourism-based approaches can offer to the debate. On one hand a sound balance between mitigating and adapting approaches seems desirable. Structural Funds are probably best placed to contribute in the case of the latter. However, even in a region like Yorkshire and the Humber, amongst the highest at risk areas in the United Kingdom to suffer from climate change, responses have only recently started emerging, and local initiatives are patchy in their approach, offering an interesting dilemma for the role of Structural Fund programmes in this area. Tellingly, the 2007-2013 Operational Programme for the region, which is now managed and steered by Yorkshire Forward, does not have any provisions for climate change, but rather focuses on the

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<sup>25</sup> GOYH (2007).

EU's renewed Lisbon Objectives. Whilst Structural Funds are not designed to be the answer to the European climate change effort, a more holistic approach is needed where every possible effort and synergy with environmentally sustainable goals should be sought and prioritised.

## 2. Regional practices

### 2.1. Case Study: *The Deep, Hull*

#### **Hull: background**

The city of Hull, located at the junction of the River Hull and the Humber estuary, developed as a significant port in the Middle Ages, trading with northern Europe. The 18th and 19th centuries saw considerable growth in Hull's whaling and fishing industries, as well as the industrial processing of imported raw materials. Hull's trade and industry were further boosted with the advent of the railways. The city was at its most prosperous in the early 20th century, but later in the century saw decline in many of its traditional industries and closure of the smaller, older docks. It still remains an important port, now handling container freight, and ferry terminal; Hull is part of the Humber ports complex, the largest complex in the United Kingdom owned and managed by Associated British ports – a private operating company.<sup>26</sup> Hull also has a busy P&O ferry connection with Rotterdam (the Netherlands) and Zeebrugge (Belgium).

The population of Hull has been in decline over recent decades although it is now starting to grow again, albeit at a much slower rate than the forecast regional and English averages over the next 20 years. In 2006 it was estimated at 256,200, and it is currently predicted to rise to around 260,100 by 2029, although this number will still be 14% less than the post-war peak of 302,800 reached in 1962.<sup>27</sup> Although unemployment rates have fallen over recent years, as they have across the United Kingdom, they are higher for Hull (8.5% of the economically active working-age population in 2006-7) than for the region as a whole (5.5%) and the United Kingdom (5.3%). The rates of economic inactivity are also higher for Hull than for the region and nationally.

Hull is notable for its low skills base, and of those in work, higher proportions are in low-skilled or unskilled jobs than in the rest of the region or in the United Kingdom as a whole. In 2006 24.9% of the working-age population of Hull had no qualifications, compared to 15.3% in the region and 13.8% nationally.<sup>28</sup> In 2005-06, 7.3% of 16-year-olds in Hull left school with no qualifications, compared to only 3.8% regionally and 3.3% nationally; furthermore, in 2005 14.9% of 16- to 18-year-olds in Hull were not in employment, education or training, compared to the regional average of 10% and the national average of 8.4%.<sup>29</sup>

On the combined measures that make up the English Index of Deprivation 2007, Hull is ranked as the 11<sup>th</sup> most deprived local authority district out of 354 English districts. On employment, 49% of the city's 163 Super Output Areas (SOAs) were among the most

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<sup>26</sup> Humber Economic Partnership (2006), *Progress in the Humber 2005*, report for Yorkshire Futures.

<sup>27</sup> Sources: Office for National Statistics, Neighbourhood Statistics, and Revised 2004-based Subnational Population Projections for England (September 2007); Hull Trends Factsheet 11F, Hull City Council.

<sup>28</sup> Source: Nomis.

<sup>29</sup> Humber Economic Partnership (2006), *Progress in the Humber 2006*, report for Yorkshire Futures; Yorkshire Futures 2007.

deprived 20% of SOAs in England. For the domain of education, skills and training, 63% of the city's SOAs were among the most deprived 20%.<sup>30</sup>

Hull City Council has a programme of regeneration, working together with public, private, community and voluntary sector organizations within the Local Strategic Partnership (CityVision), with the aim of reversing the long-standing processes of economic and social decline. In recent years, a number of major regeneration projects have been instigated; delivery of the City Centre Master Plan is being managed by the urban regeneration company, CityBuild (to be developed into a new city development company, Hull Forward). The fruits of these programmes are now being seen, particularly in Hull city centre.

Hull had been for a long time one of Yorkshire's most significant regeneration challenges. Whilst operating successful trade and ferry links through its ports, Hull had never managed to capitalise on the visitors coming and going through its ports. The very idea of Hull being a visitor attraction had been inconceivable up to recently. The Deep and the connected suite of tourism ERDF-financed projects challenged and changed collective public perception in a town that had been seen to be failing.

### **The Deep**

The Deep, situated on the north bank of the Humber Estuary, is a charitable public aquarium dedicated to increasing people's enjoyment and understanding of the world's oceans. The Deep consists of four elements: a tourist attraction housed in an iconic building with one of Europe's deepest tanks (known as the 'submarium'); a business centre, renting high quality business units (managed workspaces); a lifelong learning centre; and a research facility used by the University of Hull department of marine studies.

The Deep opened in March 2002, and more recently has been extended due to its success, as it was outgrowing its facilities; so far it has received over two million visitors from the United Kingdom and abroad. The visitor attraction uses a combination of interactive displays, audiovisual presentations and living exhibits. It has a very active education programme, with an average of 20,000 school visits a year, and it employs two full-time teachers. A team of marine biologists looks after the animals, as well as carrying out research into the marine environment.



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<sup>30</sup> Department for Communities and Local Government (2007), *Indices of Deprivation 2007*.

*Photograph: Courtesy of The Deep*

The Deep was originally expected to attract 250,000 visitors annually. In its first full year, The Deep had 855,657 visitors; after five years the number has now settled down to some 400,000 visitors annually. The most recent annual turnover was €8.2m (Table 1). The surplus is ploughed back into the business to update and generate exhibition content.

**Table 1 Annual turnover for The Deep**

	31 Jan 2003	31 Jan 2004	31 Jan 2005	31 Jan 2006	31 Jan 2007
Turnover	€6,558,209	€7,807,134	€6,463,539	€8,194,707	€8,242,934

*(Source: The Deep)*

## **2.2. Building and managing partnership**

Critical for the success of The Deep was that it was developed by a partnership of public and private sectors, between the City Council (and led by the Council), the Natural History Museum (at an early stage), a private sector company, and the University of Hull. The private sector company, which it was originally intended should manage the attraction, eventually dropped out as it was involved in building another aquarium elsewhere; another private sector company then joined the partnership, but also later left. One problem with partnership with the private sector was that the companies had different aims, aspirations and standards to the public sector agencies. At the very core of the conceptual vision behind The Deep project was to *‘generate a sustainable tourism attraction that was strongly rooted in Hull’s heritage (fishing, maritime trade and the sea) and presented exciting and innovative possibilities for the future and had a strong educational content targeted and linked with local and national educational programmes’*.<sup>31</sup>

Developing the concept of The Deep proceeded gradually, with the current Chief Executive guiding it in his then role as Director of Leisure Services at Hull City Council. There were initial phases of researching proposals and viability, refining the original scope and intentions of the project, until the final strong, visionary concept emerged.

The project went through constant fine-tuning, including discussions with key and wider stakeholder groups which led to it gradually and organically accumulating new characteristics that would enable it to be accepted. Thus, community engagement was key to the project’s success; local support was built up during the development phases by explaining it to many local community groups. This was crucial to building the vision, as for some it was controversial. Many people thought that because of the nature of Hull, considered by its inhabitants to be an industrial city and port with no tradition of tourism, the project would not succeed.

Another success factor was that an extra means of generating revenue, building high-quality business units for rental and thus responding to commercial needs within the city, was part of the whole scheme from an early stage; this form of cross-subsidy meant that the aquarium is not so reliant on visitor income, which naturally fluctuates, and could therefore set admission charges at reasonable levels while reducing the project’s financial risk and providing job security for staff.

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<sup>31</sup> Interview with Colin Brown, Chief Executive Officer, The Deep

A third success factor was the emphasis on the educational value, which was a high priority from the outset. Given the poor educational attainment levels in Hull, as outlined above, it was seen as crucial to place education at the heart of The Deep’s mission.

### 2.3. Attracting financial resources

The Deep Phase 1 was largely funded by the Millennium Commission, with a ‘cocktail of funding’ from ERDF/PESCA, English Partnerships, SRB1, SRB3, Hull City Council, University of Hull, the Environment Agency, and the private sector (see Table 2). The Chief Executive believes that one of the reasons the project has been successful is that they had identified the need for that building, and had a strategy, *before* the grant funding became available, and not the other way round. European money in many ways provided a gateway to access the Millennium funding (see also figure 2.1).

**Table 2 The Deep – funding sources (Phase 1)**

<i>Funder</i>	<i>Indicative allocation (£)</i>	<i>Indicative allocation (€)</i>
Millennium Commission	£21,476,000	€30,925,440
European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)	£7,738,250	€1,143,080
Single Regeneration Budget (SRB)	£3,831,743	€5,517,710
Yorkshire Forward (formerly English Partnerships)	£3,364,838	€4,845,367
Kingston upon Hull City Council	£5,396,395	€7,770,808
The University of Hull	£800,516	€1,152,743
Miscellaneous contributions	£651,857	€938,674
Capital Allowances	£2,096,739	€3,019,304
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£45,356,338</b>	<b>€65,313,126</b>

(Source: *The Deep*)

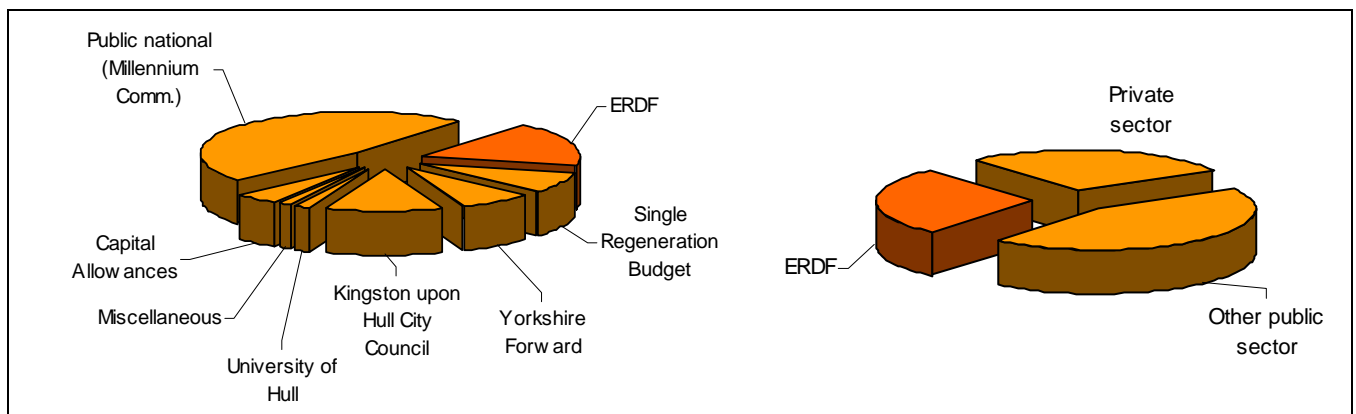
The extension to The Deep (Phase 2), incorporating a new display area, the Twilight Zone, together with further educational and reception space, received funding from the 2000-2006 Objective 2 ERDF Programme, together with other public and private sector money (Table 3). The project commenced in April 2003, and was completed in 2007.

**Table 3 The Deep – funding sources (Phase 2)**

<i>Funder</i>	<i>Indicative allocation (£)</i>	<i>Indicative allocation (€)</i>
European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), Objective 2, Priority 4, Measure 4.2	£1,700,000	€2,448,000
Private sector	£1,722,778	€2,480,800
Other public sector	£2,767,000	€3,984,480
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£6,189,778</b>	<b>€8,913,280</b>

(Source: *GOYH Compendium of Objective 2 (2000-2006) ERDF Projects in Yorkshire and The Humber*)

**Figure 2.1 The Deep – funding sources (Phases 1 & 2)**



(Source: *The Deep and GOYH Compendium of Objective 2 (2000-2006) ERDF Projects in Yorkshire and The Humber*)

#### **2.4. Supporting local economy**

The Deep has regenerated a derelict area of land and provided an iconic building and high quality tourist attraction both to engender pride within the community and contribute to Hull’s economic development. The building’s unique angular sculptural quality has certainly made its mark; the architect Terry Farrell had as his aim the creation of “*something that gave Hull a face, something that symbolised the city's regeneration. At the very first presentation, I said this should be something externally identifiable... I showed them pictures of my buildings on postage stamps and banknotes, and said, ‘This is what you should aim for.’ And it’s worked: The Deep has been on a postage stamp. It’s part of Hull.*”<sup>32</sup> The Deep has become one of the city’s most memorable landmarks, with a national reputation.

The Deep also supports the local economy directly, both by providing employment, and by the provision of high-quality office units in the business centre, filling a need in the business community and helping to attract new companies to the city. The business centre is full, with a waiting list. The Deep currently provides employment for 128 people, in the aquarium itself as well as in catering, retail, reception, guiding, maintenance, security, education, finance and management. Some 43 staff are full-time, and 85 are part-time. The Deep has ten aquarist scientific staff who are at the forefront of marine conservation practices, and are actively contributing to research programmes.

#### **2.5. Fostering new tourism activity**

The Deep also supports the local economy indirectly, by fostering new tourism activity. By attracting tourists to the city for “urban break” tourism, an activity that is not necessarily seasonal, and prompting a cultural shift towards the acceptance of tourism as economically significant, it has contributed to the success of other cultural tourism enterprises, such as the city’s museums, and to the development of the city’s hospitality industry. Although no evaluation work has yet been conducted to quantify these indirect effects, anecdotal evidence indicates that the number of overnight stays in Hull has doubled since the opening of The

<sup>32</sup> “But does it work?” Steve Rose, *The Guardian*, 21 July 2007. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/weekend/story/0,,2129861,00.html>.

Deep, and that The Deep's success has contributed to the viability of the new hotel being built, also with ERDF funding, on the east bank of the River Hull.

The Deep has a high number of repeat visitors to the aquarium, and its evening restaurant facilities attract a different market segment. The visitor figures remain fairly steady throughout most of the year, with marked peaks at all school half-term and holiday periods, indicating that the universal appeal of The Deep has overcome the traditional tourism seasonality problem.

## **2.6. *Contributing to global sustainability***

The Deep's first contribution to sustainability is that it was constructed as an energy-efficient building, for environmental reasons and to keep running costs down. As an attraction it also contributes to sustainable tourism in the region, in that it helps to generate income and employment for local people, while enhancing the city's environment and culture.

Its main contribution to global sustainability, however, is through its educational and conservation roles. Education is integral to the mission of The Deep; its displays chart the history of life in the oceans since the beginning of time, as well as looking to the future and the impacts of global climate change on marine and coastal environments. By making generations of young people aware of the ramifications of climate change and the fragility of ecosystems, The Deep is contributing to understanding and addressing the problems by those who will be the policy-makers of the future.

Additionally, the scientific staff at The Deep are involved in marine life breeding programmes as well as conservation projects and research, both in-house and collaborative.<sup>33</sup> The Deep's Director of Husbandry and Conservation, for example, is also a co-ordinator of the European Elasmobranch Aquatic Sustainability Programme, which involves shark conservation initiatives within the European zoo and aquarium community. Another example of collaboration is the Secor project, based in the Netherlands, which is examining the feasibility of propagating hard corals using sexual reproduction methods rather than the traditional method of fragmenting adult coral colonies. The Deep is one of the institutions involved in furthering this research into techniques which could have a vital part to play in the re-seeding of damaged coral reefs in the wild. Staff from The Deep disseminate the results of their research at national and international conferences and in scientific publications.

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<sup>33</sup> For details, see: <http://www.thedeep.co.uk/research/research.php>.

## Main findings

- 1. In the UK there is a need for a new national coastal policy input and review of the support for tourism activity in coastal areas.** Trends in employment and migration suggest that UK coastal areas have a robust economies (Beatty and Fothergill, 2003). However, there are seaside towns, for example in Yorkshire where the decline of traditional sectors has severe implications for unemployment, net out-migration, poor youth educational attainment standards and youth retention in the local labour market e.g. Whitby. Tourism in seaside towns, even when in decline because of wider market competitive forces, remains an important employer for most seaside towns and its potential that needs unlocking. UK national policy needs to be focused on delivery in specific localities, and renewed tourism initiatives are required.
- 2. EU Structural Funds have a varied impact on the Tourism offer of coastal towns in Yorkshire.** It is difficult to assess the specific Structural Funds impact on the coastal tourism offer, and range of projects in the case of the Yorkshire 2000-2006 Objective 2 Programme. The Objective 2 programme finance is limited in scale (unlike in the adjacent Objective 1 programme in South Yorkshire) and its impact is spread across a wide geographical area. The ‘thinning’ of European public policy means a limited ability to affect change in seaside locations. On the other hand, as for example in Scarborough and Hull, strong targeted and grouped sets of themed projects have provided a “critical mass” of tourist and heritage activity which has been put in place in the hope that it can be sustained and encourage future development.
- 3. Affecting change from place-making to place-shaping.** The nature and length of decline suffered by some coastal localities means that investment in ‘bricks and mortar’, i.e. infrastructural and physical investment in place-making initiatives, is insufficient on its own. Hull, Scarborough and Whitby have had to rebrand themselves and change the way they are perceived, reflecting a need for a place-shaping approach. Skills training is to be considered alongside physical investment.
- 4. The potential in partnership delivery is influenced by the nature of the seaside town and the scale ERDF and matched public sector resource investment from other mainstream programmes.** In larger coastal urban conurbations, a combination, of stronger local authority role, public sector investment from programmes ranging from the ERDF to Lottery and the SRB and use of masterplanning and special delivery partnership vehicles (e.g. in Hull and its URC) have proved to be an effective delivery mechanism for ERDF-funded tourism projects, often generating a greater confidence from the private sector.
- 5. Due to the scale of the Yorkshire and Humber Objective 2 Programme, investment, reverse leverage of Structural funds appears to have occurred.** National mainstream public sector programmes e.g. SRB6, NRF, Lottery and Millennium funds have been instrumental in matching and leveraging ERDF programme funding. This is particularly the case in smaller settlements and localities. However, ERDF is still an important component in the funding mix available in those localities, and thus the EU contribution and impact can be difficult to isolate. Opportunities in the 2007-2013 programmes such as JESSICA need to be explored in relation to coastal towns.

6. **Investing in a tourism heritage-based approach as a tool for renewing distinctiveness, character and identity in coastal areas, and differentiating the tourism offer from coastal resorts to heritage seaside towns needs to be further developed.** Whitby is a good example a successful such approach but consideration needs to be given to timescales as it often takes longer than 7 years of investment to achieve this change.
7. **Investment in architectural distinctiveness and higher quality design to achieve place-shaping and to change perceptions can be achieved with coastal tourism flagship projects.**
8. **Investment in cultural themed tourism as a way of differentiating the tourism offer in towns and settlements that have historically performed an industrial function is required.** Making use of the historic fabric and creatively linking it to the creative and cultural industries and business service industries is an approach used in Scarborough for example which promises success.
9. In the next seven years (2007-2013), greater emphasis is going to be placed on the renewed Lisbon objectives on competitiveness. As it is exemplified in the Yorkshire and the Humber Operational programme for 2007-2013, tourism has lower profile as a sector to benefit from EU Structural policy. This will place a greater pressure on UK national mainstream programmes to continue to regenerate coastal areas and the development of their tourism based local economies. **Tourism remains a fragmented sector in the UK and there are still few signs of concerted action to fill the gaps.**

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## **Acronyms**

CCAP	Climate Change Action Plan
ERYC	East Riding of Yorkshire Council
GOYH	Government Office for Yorkshire & the Humber
HEP	Humber Economic Partnership
HTZ	Humber Trade Zone
IDP	Integrated Development Plan
RDA	Regional Development Agency
YF	Yorkshire Forward, RDA for Yorkshire and the Humber region
RES	Regional Economic Strategy
RSS	Regional Spatial Strategy
SOA	Super Output Area
SRB	Single Regeneration Budget
STP	Sustainable Tourism Project
URC	Urban Regeneration Company
YNYPU	York and North Yorkshire Partnership Unit

## Annex

**Table 4. Objective 2 (2000-2006) ERDF projects related to tourism in the North Yorkshire and Humber sub-regions**

<i>Objective 2</i>	<i>ERDF Grant Offer (€)</i>	<i>Private (€)</i>	<i>Other Public (€)</i>	<i>Voluntary (€)</i>	<i>Original Forecast</i>	
					<i>Gross Jobs Accommodated</i>	<i>Gross New Jobs Created</i>
<b>Priority 1</b>						
Measure 1.2	14,864	2,124	25,479	0	0	5.00
<b>Priority 2</b>						
Measure 2.1	74,323	10,619	127,401	0	0	25.00
Measure 2.2	437,257	304,829	734,720	36,720	0	100.00
<b>Priority 4</b>						
Measure 4.2	33,881,354	21,511,665	62,261,961	429,096	309.65	832.00
Measure 4.3	1,792,433	165,600	2,942,067	0	20.00	30.00
Measure 4.4	2,980,073	1,629,717	4,194,395	168,280	0	358.50
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>39,180,303</b>	<b>23,624,554</b>	<b>70,286,023</b>	<b>634,095</b>	<b>329.65</b>	<b>1,350.50</b>

(Source: GOYH Compendium of Objective 2 (2000-2006) ERDF Projects in Yorkshire and The Humber)

Total number of projects = 55

**Table 5. Objective 2 (2000-2006) ERDF projects related to coastal tourism in the North Yorkshire and Humber sub-regions**

<i>Objective 2</i>	<i>ERDF Grant Offer (€)</i>	<i>Private (€)</i>	<i>Other Public (€)</i>	<i>Voluntary (€)</i>	<i>Original Forecast</i>	
					<i>Gross Jobs Accommodated</i>	<i>Gross New Jobs Created</i>
<b>Priority 4</b>						
Measure 4.2	24,307,315	20,488,212	44,522,349	301,412	251.65	586.30
Measure 4.4	2,177,590	1,280,762	3,020,244	0	0	315.75
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>26,484,905</b>	<b>21,768,974</b>	<b>47,542,594</b>	<b>301,412</b>	<b>251.65</b>	<b>902.05</b>

(Source: GOYH Compendium of Objective 2 (2000-2006) ERDF Projects in Yorkshire and The Humber)

Total number of projects = 26

**Table 6. Coastal tourism projects by town, Yorkshire and Humber region: ERDF (2000-2006) and other funding sources**

<i>Town/city</i>	<i>ERDF</i>		<i>Other Public</i>		<i>Private Sector</i>		<i>Voluntary Sector</i>	
	€	% of total for town	€	% of total for town	€	% of total for town	€	% of total for town
Hull	10,233,065	22.6	17,894,311	39.6	17,085,531	37.8	0	0.0
Bridlington	6,775,439	33.9	12,404,193	62.0	832,032	4.2	0	0.0
Cleethorpes	4,459,815	34.7	5,638,566	43.9	2,760,061	21.5	0	0.0
Whitby	2,802,532	33.1	5,133,038	60.6	228,600	2.7	301,412	3.6
Scarborough	2,174,037	23.0	6,419,651	68.0	851,365	9.0	0	0.0
Staites	40,016	44.5	38,434	42.8	11,385	12.7	0	0.0
<b>TOTAL COASTAL REGION</b>	<b>26,484,904</b>	<b>27.6</b>	<b>47,528,193</b>	<b>49.5</b>	<b>21,768,974</b>	<b>22.7</b>	<b>301,412</b>	<b>0.3</b>

(Source: GOYH Compendium of Objective 2 (2000-2006) ERDF Projects in Yorkshire and The Humber)