

OBJECT

The Leamington Society shares the concern at the lack of visitor attractions and the need to increase and enhance tourism. However we feel that the Council's policy is too narrow and limited in scope. It does not support "appropriate development of tourism and visitors accommodation" because it has ***no stated policy*** towards achieving many of the activities listed below, most of which are well established methods to attract visitors into the district, and particularly the town centres.

Surely the policy must spell out, in language easily understood by both residents and potential investors in the district, what can be done by us all, together with the incentives, in order to increase visitors and tourist income to our towns.

We believe the Council should consider the protection (from Change of Use orders), and encourage the construction and maintenance of buildings and open sites to house:

- **Information**
Properly trained and staffed Information centres for all three main towns in central and accessible sites. These must be equipped with computerised real time booking facilities for local B&Bs and hotels and open long hours (as is done in Bath to great effect).
- **Hotels**
Good value hotels to serve as a centre for touring in all three towns with provision for nearby and overnight parking. The prerequisite for new visitor accommodation in rural areas to be accessible by means other than the private car is unreasonable and too restrictive.
- **Theatres, concert halls and cinemas**
Theatres for professional productions of plays, operatic and musical productions and with real facilities for amateur groups are needed, as are concert venues for professional and amateur groups good enough to attract international artists. These are ***in addition*** to the cultural quarter (Opportunity Site D) – the ***only site*** mentioned in the consultation document. The Spa Centre is but one example.
- **Nightlife**
Nightclubs and evening entertainment activities (such as the successful Assembly rooms). Many student and amateur bands yearn to have town centre gigs.
- **Food & Drink**
A choice of food and drink venues: Restaurants / Bistros / Bars and national popular brands (McDonalds, KFC, Wagamamas) in town centres.
- **Sport**
Sporting events (such as National Bowling events in Victoria Park) and also to attract popular national events such as Darts / Choir contests / Indoor bowls / Talent shows etc.
- **Markets & funfairs**
Facilities for fun-fairs and markets including regular markets for local crafts people

and other groups: Farmers markets, Christmas markets, the popular Arts Trail, the French market.

- **Libraries and classrooms**

Libraries and Adult education provision: Line and ballroom dancing, art clubs, craft clubs, Tai Chi, Yoga, Literary clubs, Pilates and sport generally.

- **Parking provision**

Provision of late night and low cost parking for evening events – is this a Planning issue?

- **Religious events**

Churches, mosques, temples, the Gurdwara, festivals, memorial services.

- **Development of the town of Leamington Spa as a Conference Centre** This should be considered with the E.C. Harris report on the district's assets (perhaps a good new use for the Town Hall or Riverside House?). The spa town of Harrogate is a successful conference centre model which consistently attracts national conferences and trade shows of a diverse nature. Examples are the Gift Fair, Antiques Fair, National Bedding Federation, National Furniture Show, Recruitment Fairs, All major Party Political and Trades Union conferences and others.

The provision for Camping and Caravanning sites (RAP15) should include provision for the accommodation of travellers. See **PO7**.

Central to the planning policy for tourism and its potential for genuine implementation must be the provision of good **Policing and Security policies** particularly for night time, late night and high attendance events.