



Botley

Project Case Study



# Supported By



From November 2006 the England Rural Development Programme has been implemented by SEEDA. Hidden Britain is a programme managed under the existing scheme and supported by Defra, Tourism South East, and SERCC. The project works to ensure social and economic growth in rural communities across the South East through small tourism initiatives. [www.seeda.co.uk](http://www.seeda.co.uk)



SERCC is the regional umbrella organisation of the eight Rural Community Councils across the South East. RCCs are independent, county-based, rural community development charities, providing support and advice to rural community organisations and individuals. They are the major rural VCS stakeholder in a range of local, regional and national funding and support initiatives in the delivery of public services. They also provide infrastructure support to rural voluntary and community groups in both generic and specialist arenas. [www.sercc.org.uk](http://www.sercc.org.uk)

## TOURISM SOUTH EAST

Tourism South East is the regional body dedicated to fostering tourism growth and innovation in the region; a partnership of industry with regional and local government.

[www.industry.visitsoutheastengland.com](http://www.industry.visitsoutheastengland.com)



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Project Report	4	This report is intended to describe the process used and results delivered by an individual Hidden Britain project. It covers all the major elements of the project so it can be used as a case-study for other communities. In order to make this as useful as possible it is presented in an objective light with attention paid to the failings as well as the successes.
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### Overview of project

This project aims to implement the development of a sustainable tourism strategy in Botley. By addressing the key subjects of visitor perception and information provision the project aims to attract more visitors by reinventing the Botley brand, making them aware of all that is available in the Botley area, and providing better information infrastructure once they arrive.



### Need for the project

Botley is a small living and working Market Town sited in Southern Hampshire, on the fringes of Southampton, and is easily accessible from the M27, SW Trains and Southampton airport. There is a large potential visitor base that could be generating increased economic benefit for the local businesses, however very few people are aware of Botley's offer and therefore it gets overlooked.

Botley has a good selection of businesses but more needs to be done to increase the profile of the area and ensure extended stays. The area has a good deal to offer the visitor, however the basic necessities that attract, inform and interpret are lacking. Botley does not get its fair share of visitors, and as such local businesses whilst not struggling, could be garnering greater benefit. Tourism is no longer under local authority remit which also presents a challenge.

The need for the Tourism Initiative was established by a Market Town Health Check completed in 2005. The village had recently lost both its bank and its baker. In its 19<sup>th</sup> century prime, Botley was a Market Town with thriving industries based on surrounding woodland and the nearby River Hamble. The Health Check highlighted the need for better signage and emphasised the fragile nature of Botley's economy. In a series of public meetings, residents expressed their wish for Botley to retain its character by remaining a thriving commercial





centre. The village needed more visitors to support local businesses, many of which are very specialised. The modest charms of the village needed to be brought before a wider audience.



### Planning of the project

In order to deliver projects addressing the needs identified in the Health Check, Botley formed a community partnership.

In the summer of 2005, the HB Development Officer attended a meeting of the Botley Market Towns Partnership to explain how Hidden Britain could assist in achieving the tourism objectives of the Healthcheck. The partnership were keen to take up this offer and rather than forming a separate group, decided the whole partnership would function as the project group.

Research was gathered using visitor surveys, community workshops, tourism

stakeholder meetings and business questionnaires. From this base data the Botley Market Towns Partnership developed an action plan of tourism projects.

### Who was involved?

The project group comprised representatives from; Botley Parish Council, Botley Traders, All Saints Church, Botley Choral Society, local residents, and Eastleigh Borough Council.

With the advice and support of Hidden Britain and Eastleigh Borough Council, the partnership was able to turn this action plan into achievable objectives by securing funding.

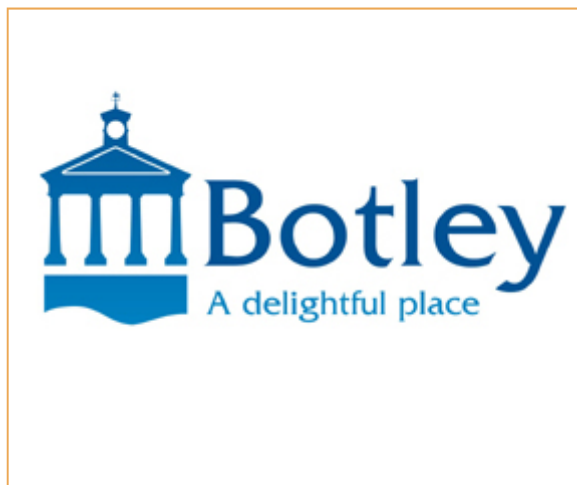
### Status of funding

£17,045 grant obtained from England Rural Development Programme, Rural Enterprise Scheme in June 2006. This was matched by an estimated £3,000 of in-kind time and £1250 contribution





from the Traders Association.



### What was included?

- ◆ Create a new brand and logo for Botley.
  - ◆ Provide maps of the town installed at key locations, indicating the location of local businesses, food and drink providers, accommodations and attractions.
  - ◆ Create a Botley “in and around” leaflet that will illustrate the facilities and services available both within the town, and in the surrounding area.
  - ◆ Design and construct a visitor dedicated side to the [www.botley.com](http://www.botley.com) website.
  - ◆ An event was also planned to launch the project to the general public.
- ◆ There was accompanying publicity to promote the project to both local residents and visitors.

### Project implementation

In order to proceed with the project meetings were held to discuss and develop the new Botley logo, as all other elements would use this as the design starting point. The partnership undertook several branding exercises in order to come up with the final chosen design. The Market Hall was decided upon as the main icon due to the prominence of the building within Botley. The Hamble River is also shown as being important symbol of Botley. The new logos will be used by organisations in Botley to promote cohesiveness for the new branding.

The partnership then worked with Walking Distance to develop briefs for the design and content of the leaflet and maps. Local volunteers helped to source content, provided information, contributed illustrative material, tested walks,





proof read copy, and took editorial decisions.

The group also worked with the web designer to determine the format and navigation of the [www.botley.com](http://www.botley.com) website. In tandem with the development of the visitor side of the website, the community side was also redeveloped, entirely by local volunteers.

The map boards were installed at key points around the town; the main car-parks and the train station, a finger post was also installed in Botley Square providing directional information to visitors on arrival.

The leaflets are available in local shops. They have been distributed by Walking Distance and Hamble Valley Tourism to Tourist Information Centres and nearby hotels.



A launch event was held on 31<sup>st</sup> May, which was well attended and universally praised by those who did attend.



### Who benefits?

In terms of tourism the project has delivered Botley a cohesive visitor package, which can be used to draw visitor in, inform them when they arrive, and interpret the surroundings in a meaningful way. The benefits from this will in main be to the local businesses by increasing visitor spend, however the community as a whole will profit through the boost this will give to the local economy.

However in delivering this project, a large cross-section of the community has been involved thereby ensuring this is a real community owned and led project. High quality tourist materials, making explicit Botley's attractions, help remind local people of what they may take for granted.

A greater variety of shops helps local residents, many of whom are elderly and do not wish to drive to out-of-town supermarkets.



Thriving local businesses, with all the advantages that they bring, create the atmosphere valued by local people.

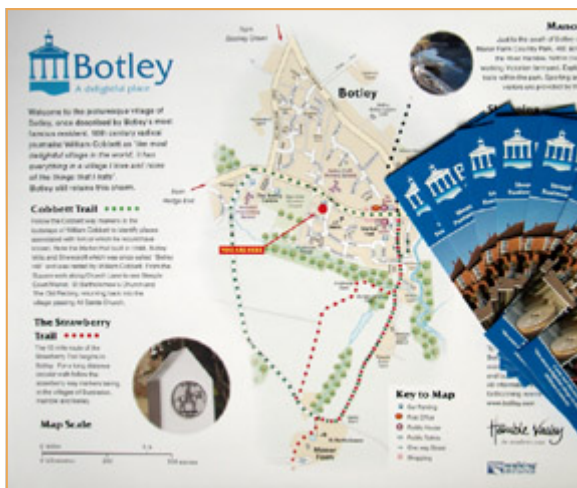
The website has huge potential to keep local people in touch with local developments.

The existence and work of the Market Town Partnership has brought together a variety of local people: officers of the Borough Council, Councillors from the County, the Borough and the Parish, traders, representatives of the Church and local societies as well as local residents, and has unlocked funding for local projects.

The launch of the Tourism Projects emphasised to Local Traders the efforts being made on their behalf.



stakeholder meeting, co-wrote the funding bid and wrote the delivery plan. He also facilitated the logo design sessions, helped the group write the design briefs for the leaflet and maps, helped design the website layout, monitored progress and helped organize the launch event.



### Hidden Britain input

The Hidden Britain Development Officer (James Turner (JT)) worked with the project group every step of the way to deliver the project. He helped to plan the initial action plan, facilitated at the

### Achievements

- ◆ The high quality of work and input by volunteers.
- ◆ The continued support of the organisations in and around Botley
- ◆ The support and input from the District Council.
- ◆ The delivery of a large project on a tight timescale.
- ◆ The high level of community involvement and ownership

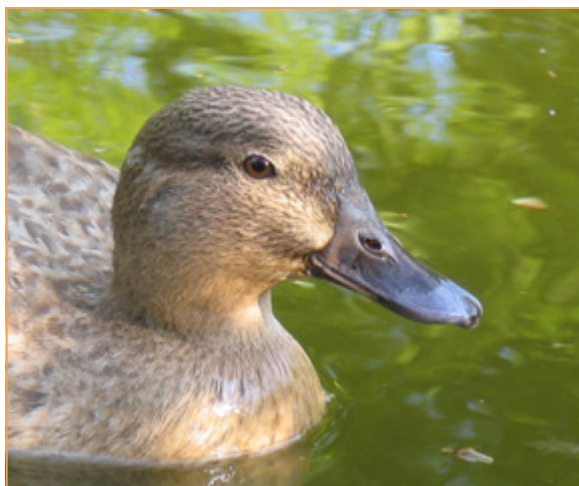


# Botley



### Lessons learnt

- ◆ With good support community projects can be delivered on short timescales.
- ◆ Groups with little tourism expertise require a larger amount of guidance.
- ◆ Parish or Town Council support is crucial to maintain projects.
- ◆ Having one contact for design elements makes the project more efficient.
- ◆ Support from the Local Authority was invaluable.
- ◆ It is possible to run projects with a large steering group.



rial board, and provides a very flexible and responsive forum. New businesses can be entered immediately. It is being expanded to include local walks, historical information and local news. The development of the website is an ongoing process. The mapboards and finger posts will be maintained by the Borough of Eastleigh. The website is under the control of local volunteers. Money has already been allocated by the Borough for additional software. The cost of updating and re-printing the leaflets will be borne by the Parish and the Borough.

### Future Plans

An evaluation of the project is planned with a view to developing a tourism strategy. JT has been asked to help facilitate the development of this. The website is now under the control of a local edito-