

**Visiting Another Market town**

One suggestion for market town leadership groups is to put yourselves in the place of people visiting a town. Become visitors yourselves. A group of you could visit one of the other Northumberland towns in the programme and assess how visitor friendly it is.

You will notice things like signposting, car parking and how to find your way about much more than you do in your own town. You'll experience the thinking process a visitor goes through deciding what to do, where to visit and which places, shops and cafes look welcoming. You'll also experience the personal welcome given by people in shops, information centres attractions etc.

Below is a template which you could use to assess a range of aspects of your visit - to organise your thinking and learn lessons which might be useful to take back for your own town.

You could share your findings with the other town (with constructive criticism!) and could even arrange for them to visit your town in return and let you know what they think of it.....

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The following questions will help collect the thoughts of your group. You could either fill in one copy each or pool your impressions as you go along with one person taking notes.

<b>Before the visit</b>	
What are your preconceptions and mental images of the town already?	
What is it well known for?	
What can you find out about the town before you visit from the town or district website?	
How useful is the information, is it helpful in planning your visit?	
<b>Arrival in the town</b>	
As you approach the town are the signposts helpful - is there any chance you might get	

lost reaching the town?	
Is there a welcome sign or information?	
Is it clear where it's best to park?	
How easy is it to find somewhere to park for several hours?	
Are there maps or information to help you find your way around town?	
Is there an information centre - is it helpful?	
Can you find the public toilets?	
<b>Your experience of the town?</b>	
How attractive is the urban environment - its cleanliness, maintenance, street furniture, overall ambience.	
Can you find somewhere to sit down and soak up the atmosphere?	
What is there to see and do, how easy is it to find these and are they interesting/enjoyable?	
Are there any interpretation materials telling you about the history of the town or other interesting information?	
What range of eating options are there	

How interesting was the range of shops?	
What was the customer service like throughout your visit?	
<b>Reflections</b>	
How welcoming was the town to visitors?	
How could this have been improved?	
What was the best bit of your visit?	
What was the worst bit?	
<b>Useful lessons</b>	
What ideas can we take back to discuss and implement in our town?	
Any other lessons learned?	