

**Agenda Item No:** 11

**Report to:** Museums Committee

**Date of Meeting:** 1 March 2010

**Report Title:** Visitor Survey 2009

**Report By:** Cathy Walling  
Acting Museums Curator

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**Purpose of Report**

to report the findings of a visitor survey carried out in 2009

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**Recommendation(s)**

**1. the report is for noting**

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**Reasons for Recommendations**

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## Introduction

1. In 2009 the Museum was approached by GHK Consulting who had been commissioned by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) to look at the benefits of HLF projects on local economies. They were interested in how the money spent by HLF supported local jobs and businesses and contributed to training.
2. The Hastings Museum and Art Gallery refurbishment project was chosen as a case study. The survey was completed in December 2009.
3. Part of the study was a survey of visitors during August and September 2009, undertaken by market research company BDRC to investigate visitor and expenditure patterns. The survey was carried out by face-to-face interviews.

## Results of survey

4. During August and September 2009, a survey of 60 visitors to Hastings Museum was undertaken by BDRC to investigate visitor and expenditure patterns. The survey showed that 62% of people had visited the Museum before. Most visitors were on a day trip from home (70%), with 30% staying away from home. Of those staying away from home, 28% were on a short break of 2 to 3 days and 72% on a holiday of more than three days.
5. Staying visitors used a wide range of accommodation types, with 50% staying with friends and relations, 17% in rented self catering accommodation and 17% camping or caravanning. The majority (56%) had travelled fewer than 10 miles from their overnight accommodation to reach the site, with another 22% travelling between 11 and 25 miles. Visitors that had travelled from home had also travelled mostly short distances to the site, with 79% living within five miles of the Museum.
6. A majority (53%) of visitors had visited the area that day especially to visit the Museum, while a further 22% said that they were also doing other things in the area. However, the Museum was not found to have attracted people to stay in the area – no one said that they had stayed locally especially to visit the site, with the main motivations for staying visitors being a more general holiday or short break (56%) or to visit friends and relatives (33%).
7. The main reasons for visits included: “interest in a specific temporary exhibition (40%); “a general interest in what is there” (38%); or “to improve knowledge or understanding of what is there” (35%).
8. Just over half (52%) of visitors had spent some money on site, with the most popular purchases being on food and drink in the cafe/restaurant (23%) and on gifts, souvenirs or books (27%). Expenditures on site averaged £11.68 per party or £4.30 per visitor. 46% of day trippers expected to spend money off-site in the local area, with 31% expecting to buy food and drink from a cafe or restaurant, and 23% to pay for car parking.

9. Overnight visitors were asked what they had spent money on the previous day, with the most popular expenditures being on meals and drinks (53%) and accommodation (33%).

### **Conclusion**

While visitors were found to have spent some money in the local economy, the survey found that most were local people or people holidaying in the area, and that the Museum did not play a role in attracting visitors to spend money in the local economy. It was found that no extra expenditure by either staying visitors or day trippers could be attributed to the site.

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### **Wards Affected**

Ashdown, Baird, Braybrooke, Castle, Central St. Leonards, Conquest, Gensing, Hollington, Maze Hill, Old Hastings, Ore, Silverhill, St. Helens, Tressell, West St. Leonards, Wishing Tree

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### **Area(s) Affected**

Central Hastings, East Hastings, North St. Leonards, South St. Leonards

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### **Policy Implications**

Please identify if this report contains any implications for the following:

Equalities and Community Cohesiveness	Yes
Crime and Fear of Crime (Section 17)	No
Risk Management	No
Environmental Issues	No
Economic/Financial Implications	Yes
Human Rights Act	No
Organisational Consequences	Yes

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### **Background Information**

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### **Officer to Contact**

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