

2011

Carlingford Resident Survey, 2011

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Recommended Citation

Fitzgerald, J., Flanagan, S., Griffin, K., Kennedy, L., Morrissey, M. (2011) Carlingford Resident Survey, Technological University Dublin, Dublin.

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Funder: EPA, Ireland; Failte Ireland

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School of Hospitality Management and Tourism

Conference papers

Dublin Institute of Technology

Year 2011

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CARLINGFORD AND COOLEY PENINSULA RESIDENT SURVEY 2010

DIT-ACHIEV Project in Carlingford and the Cooley Peninsula



The *DIT-ACHIEV Model for the Sustainable Management of Tourism* has been developed by the School of Hospitality Management and Tourism, Dublin Institute of Technology and is endorsed by the Environmental Protection Agency and Fáilte Ireland. It explores six areas of interest - Administration, Community, Heritage, Infrastructure, Enterprise and Visitor.

The purpose of piloting this DIT-ACHIEV model in the Carlingford and Cooley Peninsula is to test its use in an Irish tourism destination, with the objective to refine and adjust its methodology, so that it can be applied in any Irish tourism destination.

Early indications are that the Model will provide the Irish Tourism Industry with a valuable tool for making its product and management far more sustainable.

In addition to data such as environmental measurements, information on water, waste, energy, transport, examination of local cultural, landscape and employment statistics, the model

requires the undertaking of three dedicated surveys:

- A Resident Survey
- A Business Survey
- A Visitor Survey

With the support of local volunteers, a Visitor Survey has been taking place throughout Carlingford and Cooley over the last 8 months, and results will be presented at the end of the season. A Business Survey will take place in the coming weeks, and this publication presents an overview

of the findings from a survey of 482 Carlingford Town and Cooley residents which took place in recent months with the support of local volunteers and DIT students.

This report presents Carlingford and Cooley people's attitudes and opinions regarding tourism and while some issues have emerged, the general response to the survey is that Carlingford and Cooley residents show great support for tourism.

***There is a positive attitude
towards tourism in
Carlingford and the Cooley
Peninsula***

Project Highlights

In early 2010 a group of researchers from the Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT) began working with a team in the Carlingford and Cooley Peninsula to explore the sustainability of tourism in the area and plan for its future management.

Team Carlingford and Cooley is composed of six local partners:

- Carlingford & Cooley Tourism Association
- Carlingford Tidy Towns
- Carlingford Heritage Trust
- Louth County Council
- Dundalk Chamber of Commerce
- Loughs Agency

During the past 12 months Team Carlingford and Cooley have met regularly with the DIT researchers and representatives of the two funding agencies - Fáilte Ireland and the Irish Environmental Protection Agency. The following are some of the key activities that have taken place:

In April 2010 very well attended public consultation meetings took place to identify the key issues and challenges for tourism in Carlingford and the Cooley Peninsula. The wide range of representation at this meeting resulted in the identification of numerous potential sustainable tourism indicators.

In October 2010, Carlingford hosted an

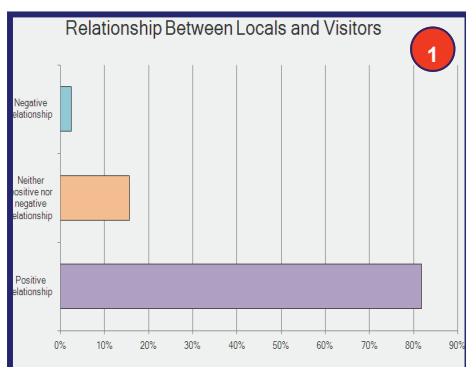
International Expert Panel Meeting where guests enjoyed the best of Carlingford Hospitality hosted by the Carlingford Cooley Tourism Association (CCTA). The main business of the weekend was a detailed workshop with the Expert Panel discussing and analysing the project to date and adding their expertise from around the world.

Articles have appeared in local papers such as the Dundalk Democrat and The Argus and the project has also been profiled in national media such as the May 2009 edition of Hotel and Restaurant Times which dedicated a two page spread to the project.

A number of presentations have been made by the project team at national and international conferences, raising the profile of the project and the Carlingford and Cooley Peninsula.

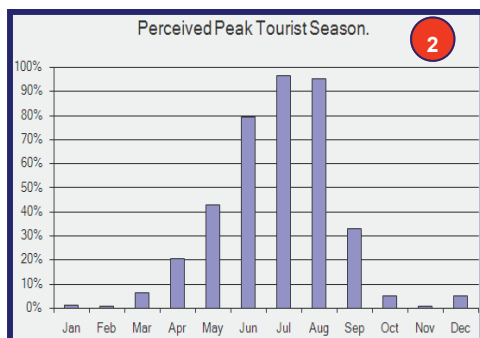


International Expert Panel



Residents in Carlingford have a very positive attitude towards visitors. **Chart 1** illustrates that 82% of residents state that locals and visitors have a positive relationship, while only 2.5% of all respondents see the relationship as negative.

Chart 2 illustrates respondents view of the peak visitor season in the Carlingford and Cooley Peninsula. The correlation between this chart and the official data by organisations such as Fáilte Ireland demonstrates the mature view of Carlingford and the Cooley

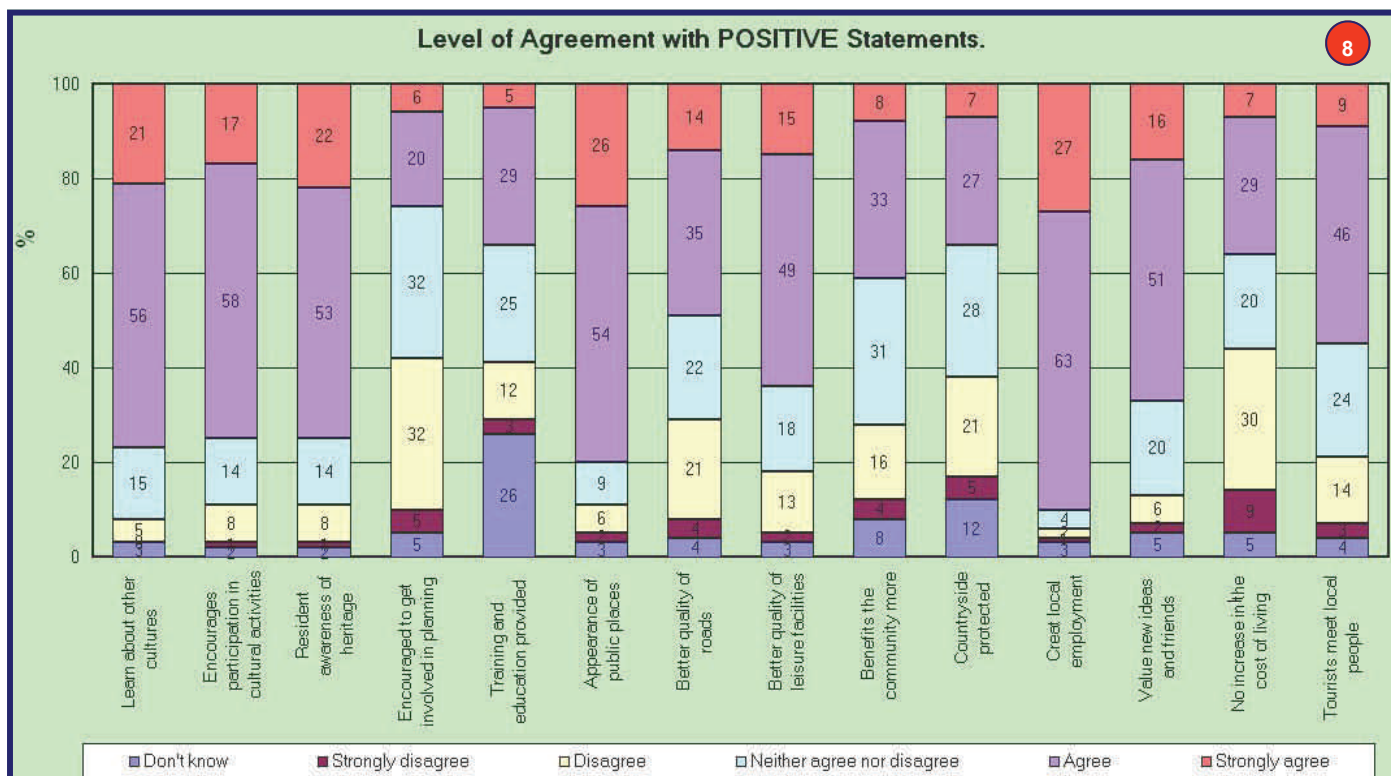
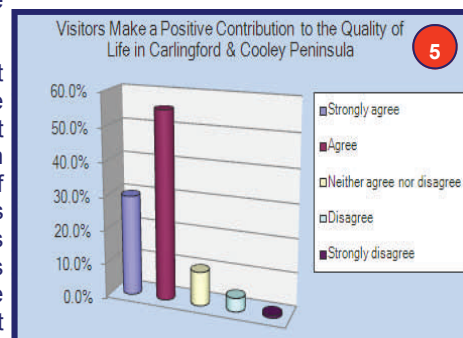
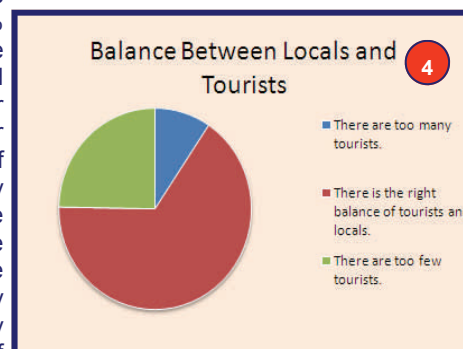
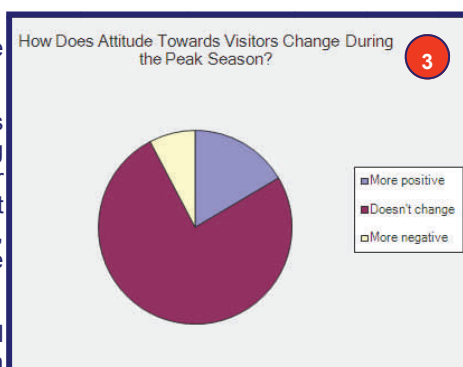


Peninsula residents regarding the industry.

Chart 3 outlines how the residents attitude toward visitors changes during the peak season. 76% state that their attitude does not change, 7% state that their attitude becomes more negative, however 17% state that their attitude becomes more positive.

Chart 4 shows that 66% of residents feel that there is the right balance between tourists and locals. 9% feel that there are too many tourists to the area but 25% feel that there are too few tourists to the area. In a destination such as Carlingford and Cooley, positive local support for tourism is essential. **Chart 5** further supports this view with 85% of respondents either agreeing or strongly agreeing that visitors make a positive contribution to the quality of life in the area. 10% gave a neutral response while only 5% either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement. Finally **Chart 6** illustrates that 87% of respondents feel that The Carlingford and Cooley Peninsula is able to cope with the number of visitors it receives.

In **Chart 7** The pink bars represent where tourism has Very Positive impacts. It is clear from this chart that tourism has the most positive impact on the Local Economy with 93% of respondents stating that the impact is either positive or very positive in this regard. The maroon and yellow bars represent Very Negative and Negative impacts respectively. The chart



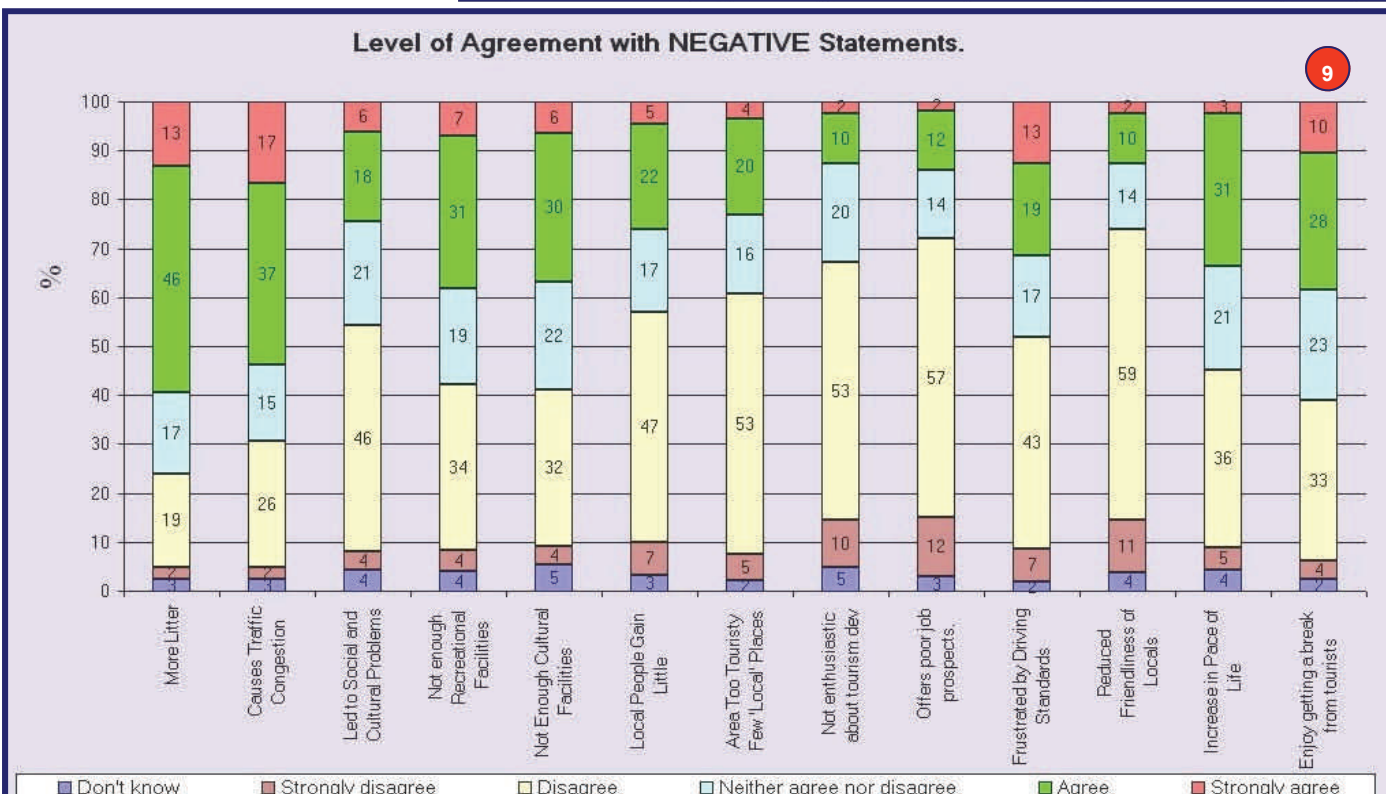
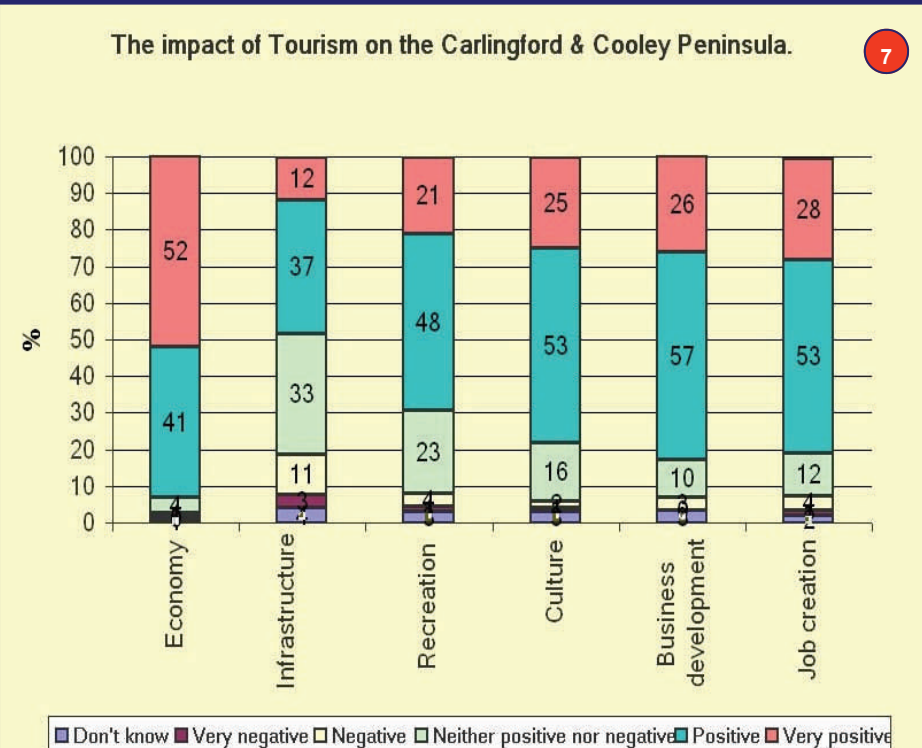
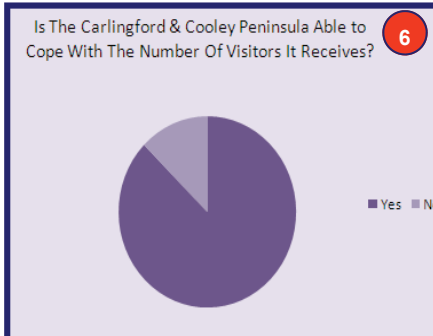
demonstrates that the impact of tourism on local infrastructure is the greatest negative, with 11% seeing this as negative and a further 3% seeing the impact of tourism on infrastructure as being Very Negative. Overall it is shown that the impact of tourism on the locality is largely positive.

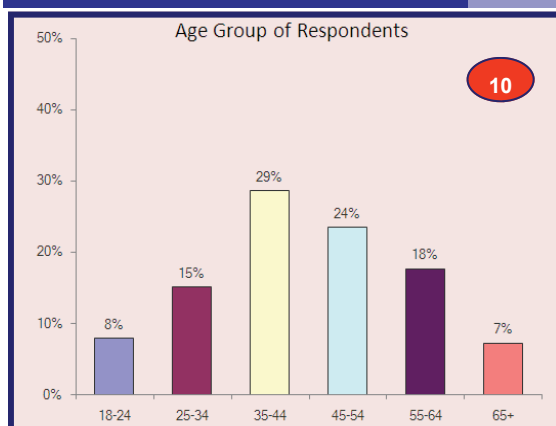
Chart 8 illustrates the results when respondents were asked to Agree or Disagree with positive statements about tourism in the area. In this instance, the pink and yellow segments on the bars identify a positive statement with which the respondents Strongly Agree or Agree respectively. The strongest positive responses are that tourism generates local employment and revenue (90%), it improves the appearance and presentation of public places (79%), provides opportunities to learn about other cultures (77%), it makes respondents more aware of local heritage and culture (75%) and encourages resident participation in cultural activities (e.g. crafts, music, art, etc) (75%).

The green and wine bars represent Disagreement and Strong Disagreement with the positive statements. From this chart it would appear that some residents believe tourism has led to increased cost of living (39% disagree with the positive statement) and residents are not encouraged to participate in planning (37%).

Chart 9 represents the findings when respondents were asked to Agree or Disagree with negative statements. The

statement which most respondents Agreed or Strongly Agreed with (purple and pink segments) was that tourism has lead to more litter in the area (59%). Another negative point was that many respondents feel that there is increased traffic congestion as a result of tourists to the area (54%). Issues such as there not being enough cultural and recreational facilities for tourists received the same numbers supporting and disagreeing with it. Similarly, 38% enjoy getting a break from the tourists during low season yet 37% disagree with the statement.





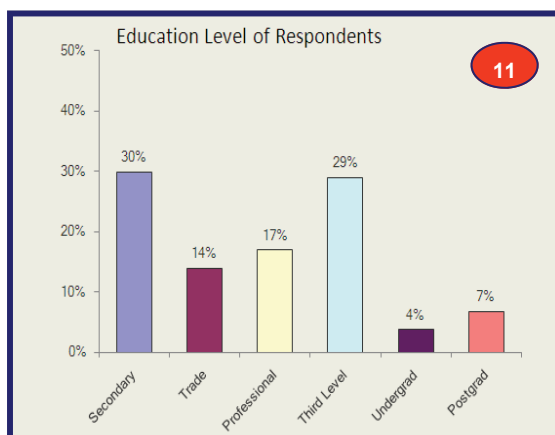
Profile of Respondents

A broad range of people responded to the survey, which was made available to all residents of Carlingford and the Cooley Peninsula. Respondents completed the survey and provided their views on-line and on printed surveys which were made available in a number of locations.

Chart 10 demonstrates that residents of all ages completed the survey with just over a quarter in the 35-44 age bracket. 46% of respondents were male and the

respondents are well educated, (see **Chart 11**). 40% have received third level education, and 30% received Secondary education.

Chart 12 illustrates that the majority (67%) of respondents are living with their family and a further 19% are living with a partner (couple). **Chart 13** presents the employment status of respondents. 36% are working full time while 20% and 21% are working part time or self employed respectively. 10% are unemployed and 9% are retired.



Working in Tourism

32% of respondents claim that they or someone in their household works in an occupation that provides products or services that are frequently used by visitors to Carlingford and the Cooley Peninsula.

The range of industries which this encompasses is very broad including traditional areas of tourism employment such as accommodation (hotel, B&B, guesthouse etc), restaurants, pubs, retail, etc.

Selection of Quotations

Throughout this report, statistics and summary data are presented. The following is a selection of direct quotes reflecting the range of opinions and comments expressed by respondents:

the lovely scenery of Carlingford Lough.

The community has worked hard to improve facilities and are doing a good job on tidiness

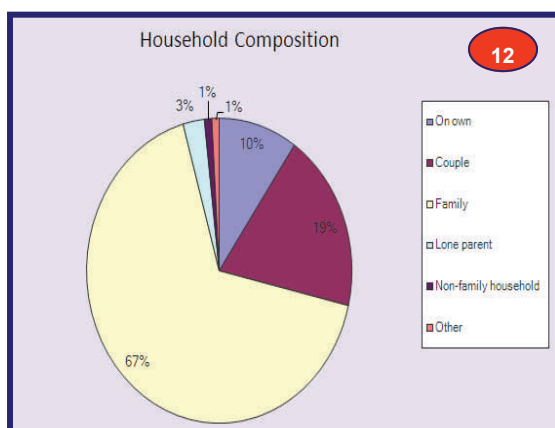
Day tourists generally come for the scenery, bring their own food and drinks and leave without contributing to the local economy.

Tourism has a positive effect on C&C peninsula. It is very environmentally friendly industry. It generates wealth for the area. It enriches the life of locals in many ways.

I love the buzz of foreigners in town.

Over the years, thanks to tourism, our area has become a beautifully maintained destination that people seem to be proud of and enjoy sharing our culture with all nationalities.

I think it's brilliant that we live in such a wonderful place that can provide lovely holidays, the tourists are always saying they hate to leave, but I never have to.



Sometimes tourists help to open your eyes and realise what a beautiful area we live in, and appreciate the many benefits.

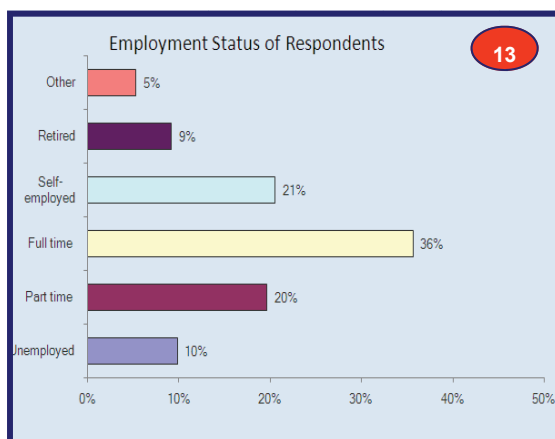
It's good to see Carlingford busy & filled with tourists. More effective advertising of the rural areas of Cooley might increase tourist numbers.

A great boost to the local economy but it is too concentrated on Carlingford and is starting to become too focused on stag/hen parties.

Parking is always a problem in Carlingford at the weekends.

Restaurants too busy at weekends.

There is a need for more facilities like walkways for tourists to appreciate



Final Comments

Many more comments were provided by the respondents ranging from the identification of particular problems to suggesting product gaps, outlining environmental issues, highlighting

signage, infrastructure, cost, peak season issues etc. All of these detailed comments will be collated and a comprehensive report will be presented to the relevant authorities.