

Public understanding of sustainable leisure and tourism

A research report completed for the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs by the University of Surrey

November 2007



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Annex I: Tourism informationError! Bookmark not defined.

Glossary

DCLG	Department of Communities and Local Government
DCMS	Department for Culture, Media and Sport
Defra	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
DfT	Department for Transport
FTO	Federation of Tour Operators
SDC	Sustainable Development Commission

Executive Summary

Introduction

Defra commissioned this project to begin to understand the public's response to sustainable leisure and tourism. The findings will inform future communication strategies, behaviour change strategies and research programmes at Defra, other government departments and related agencies.

This project addressed the following issues:

- Understanding of, and views about, sustainable leisure and tourism
- Responses to Defra's leisure and tourism behaviour goals¹, in the context of current leisure/tourism choices and aspirations
- Consumer expectations about the role of government and the leisure and tourism industries in the supply of sustainable leisure/tourism opportunities

Methodology

This project had three components:

- **Focus groups with members of the public** (see chapter 2 and Annex A for methodological details) The location and composition of the focus groups were planned to ensure a range of views and experiences would be heard but members of the public who were not interested in the environment, had not flown recently for environmental reasons, or had not taken holidays or day trips recently were not included. Participants were encouraged to talk freely around issues relating to the project aims (see above). Information about environmental impacts was presented towards the end of the groups to see if it changed participants' views.
- **A review of literature relating to the behaviour goals** (see Annex B).
- **A workshop with key people from the tourism industry** (see Annex C) This was convened after the focus group research was complete.

¹ The behaviour goals are set out in Defra (2006) An environmental behaviour strategy for Defra: Scoping report.

Environmental issues in leisure and tourism choices

On the whole, participants did not think about the environment when making leisure and tourism choices. There were five main reasons.

(1) Leisure and tourism were not seen as environmental behaviours. These behaviours were mainly concerned with fulfilling participants' own needs or their family's needs.

(2) The environmental impacts of leisure and tourism were generally not well understood. Participants focused on the tangible impacts, such as litter and pollution. They also mentioned several misconceptions, for instance

- Small everyday actions to help the environment such as reusing carrier bags have a greater impact than making changes to leisure/tourism
- Holiday activities have a greater impact than travel
- Long haul flights are only marginally worse than short haul

(3) Some participants were not concerned about the impacts, particularly the less tangible ones such as global warming.

(4) Some participants saw no point in changing their leisure or tourism behaviour unless other people or other countries reduced their environmental impacts too.

(5) Participants objected to making changes for the sake of the environment, feeling that

- It impinged on their right to do whatever they wanted with their leisure or tourism. This entitlement to holidays and a lesser extent day trips was very strongly expressed and was felt to justify lack of attention to environmental impacts.
- It was something peculiar that only serious environmentalists would do.
- It would simply make their day trip or holiday less enjoyable.

Participants were more willing to change their everyday behaviour than leisure or tourism behaviour. They believed changing everyday behaviours was more effective for addressing environmental issues and a smaller sacrifice.

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Leisure behaviour goals

Participants were fairly open to taking more of their leisure closer to home and would welcome more or better facilities locally. However, in some cases going further away added to the enjoyment of a day out. The main practical barriers to local leisure were lack of facilities and, to a lesser extent, limited knowledge.

While some participants were committed car drivers, others were willing or even keen to use public transport for their leisure. A number of obstacles would need to be addressed to encourage greater use of public transport, particularly high cost and inconvenient services. Participants realised that it was possible to buy low cost tickets if they booked in advance or travelled at certain times but this often did not suit them.

There were many and varied examples of combining several activities into a single trip. However, there was no clear view about whether combining could be encouraged. It could also prove counterproductive by encouraging reliance on cars, which make combining easier.

Popular leisure activities included those that Defra would like to encourage, such as walks in the countryside and picnics in the park, as well as those that may have a higher environmental impact. Participants seemed to feel that they should not have to change their choice of leisure activities for the sake of the environment but they were more open to doing the same activities with greater consideration.

Tourism behaviour goals

While some participants were resistant, there was considerable openness to taking more UK holidays, particularly short breaks rather main holidays. The main appeal of domestic holidays was their ease. However, overseas holidays offered sunshine and experiences that could not be found in the UK, among other attractions.

Travelling by plane was something that participants took for granted and were willing to endure even if afraid. The recent advent of cheap flights had made overseas travel more affordable and participants were reluctant to give up the opportunities it offered. Nevertheless, there was some willingness to travel by train instead where practical, provided fares come down.

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There was strong opposition to the idea of taking fewer longer holidays partly because of practical constraints and partly because several breaks give something to look forward to. However, special holidays or ones that require a long journey would justify consolidating several holidays into one.

As with leisure, there was evidence that participants would be willing to continue with their current range of activities but with greater consideration for the environment.

Requests for industry and government

Participants generally saw a greater role for government than industry in reducing the environmental impact of leisure and tourism, although they also came up with a wide range of suggestions for industry. There were several reasons including the following.

- Participants did not understand the dividing line between government and industry responsibility.
- They thought that industry would resist taking expensive action due to vested interests.
- They assumed that 'greening' had already taken place which perhaps implies space for choice editing.

However, there was a dichotomy between calls for government to take action and concern about interference.

Participants wanted to know that their pro-environmental choices were part of a wider movement. They requested that public figures, mainly politicians, should lead the way and cut down on their flying in other words that government should exemplify.

There were repeated calls for more information and numerous suggestions about what it should be like, although participants also emphasised that policies/initiatives other than information provision sent out strong messages.

- Some participants asked to be told how their actions would help while others preferred to be told what would happen if they did not take action. However, the latter "*shock tactics*" approach could backfire.
- There were several suggestions about where information could be presented, including some innovative ones such as targeting it through

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stickers on petrol pumps.

- Participants stressed that information should be presented in a way that was meaningful. They strongly preferred environmental impacts presented in terms of an everyday action ('light bulb hours') to more scientific language (tonnes of CO₂).

There was universal support for making train travel more affordable, ideally through simple user-friendly approaches. There was a mixed response to raising the cost of flying through taxes. Participants generally saw it could have an effect but objected to it mainly on the basis of fairness. The idea of a carbon tax also received a mixed response but was discussed less widely, suggesting it was less well known.

Participants requested improved facilities. They focused on public transport and leisure facilities. Some requests were basic, such as making buses safer, while others were unrealistically high, such as diverting coaches via villages.

Conclusion

The many requests for action indicate that there is scope for government and industry to encourage sustainable leisure and tourism. However, persuading consumers to consider the environment in this context presents substantial challenges particularly given the limited understanding about the scale of environmental impacts; a belief that there is no point in acting alone; and a strong sense of entitlement and attachment. It may be possible to increase the appeal and feasibility of pro-environmental choices so that they are seen as double wins. However, attachment to flying, driving, overseas holidays and activities such as shopping and theme parks should not be underestimated. Interventions that limit or restrict choice (e.g. limiting or taxing air travel) may therefore be necessary to bring about fast and wide scale behaviour change. Although such interventions may meet with a mixed reception, some consumers already expect them.

The action points below build on the focus group findings. To ensure their effectiveness, further research is needed into the details of their implementation

Action points

Focus effort on ‘open doors’

With respect to leisure, encourage greater use of nearby facilities and less use of cars. With respect to tourism, encourage more UK holidays and less use of planes and cars.

Encourage and enable consumers to make choices for environmental reasons

Provide information to enable consumers to make more informed choices. Make it quantitative, meaningful, tangible, and consistent with other government and industry initiatives. Encourage government and industry action, beyond the provision of information.

Ensure that consumers feel part of a wider movement towards pro-environmental leisure and tourism among their peers. Encourage MPs and other public figures to lead by example and take initiatives for action.

Promote motivators and overcome barriers unrelated to the environment

Encourage leisure closer to home by

- providing more leisure facilities and improving existing ones, particularly in areas with new development
- informing local residents about the facilities that are available.

Encourage UK holidays by

- marketing them as easy and ideal for short breaks
- challenging preconceptions by marketing domestic destinations as opportunities for adventure and experiencing other cultures
- finding ways to bring down both the actual and the perceived cost.

Discourage use of cars and planes for leisure and tourism by

- taking steps to reduce the cost of train travel by adopting a more user-friendly reservation and pricing strategy or making advance booking normative, like booking a flight
- taking all practical steps to make train and coach travel appealing

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- using financial incentives to encourage consumers to try train and coach travel in order to overcome negative perceptions or experiences
- giving serious consideration to taxing or limiting air travel.

Moving forward

Many of the above action points require the involvement of government departments and agencies besides Defra. For instance, Defra needs to link into DCLG regarding the provision of more leisure facilities in areas with new development. It is also crucial to involve the leisure and tourism industries in taking forward the above action points. Some initial suggestions are included in Annex C

1 Introduction

Background

- 1.1 Defra commissioned this project to begin to understand the public's response to sustainable leisure and tourism. The findings will inform future communication strategies, behaviour change strategies and research programmes at Defra, other government departments and related agencies.
- 1.2 This project is one of a programme of qualitative research clarifying where the public mindset currently sits. The other projects are on public understanding of
 - (i) Sustainable consumption of food
 - (ii) Sustainable energy use in the home
 - (iii) Sustainable finance and investment
 - (iv) Sustainable transport

Aims

- 1.3 This project addressed the following issues:
 - To unpack consumer understanding of the concept of sustainable leisure and tourism
 - To understand consumer assumptions of 'good' leisure activities
 - To understand consumer assumptions of 'good' tourism
 - To understand consumer aspirations with specific relationship to leisure and tourism activities
 - To understand consumer expectations of the role for government, holiday/tour organisations, leisure providers and travel operators in the supply of sustainable leisure activities and tourism opportunities
 - To identify possible differences in understanding, assumptions, aspirations and expectations according to varying demographics

- To inform future communication or behaviour change strategies

Overview of report

- 1.4 Chapter 2 gives an overview of the methodology used in this project. Chapter 3 reports on understanding of sustainable leisure and tourism and looks at the reasons why participants pay little attention to the environmental impacts at the moment. Chapters 4 and 5 focus on Defra's behaviour goals for leisure and tourism respectively. They report on the motivations and barriers to each behaviour goal and the overall willingness to pursue each goal further. Chapter 6 looks at who participants think should take responsibility for reducing the environmental impact of leisure and tourism and what they think should be done. Chapter 7 presents recommendations for action and for future research.

2 Methodology

2.1 This chapter describes, and where relevant explains the rationale for, the following aspects of the methodology (see Annex A for details).

- Focus groups
- Selection and recruitment of participants
- Procedure and material
- Data analysis and reporting

Focus groups

2.2 The approach taken in this project was qualitative, rather than quantitative. In qualitative research participants are encouraged to give a full description of their activities, experiences, and views, and to explain the reasons underpinning them, rather than answering preset closed questions.

2.3 Qualitative research is valuable for several reasons. Firstly, it retains the participant's point of view in its original expression. Secondly, it obtains detailed responses so that understanding is gained of the factors that affect activities, experiences and views. Thirdly, it allows unexpected issues to emerge because activities, experiences and views are discussed in an open ended way. Fourthly, it allows complex interrelationships and the context of activities, experiences and views to be explored. It is therefore ideally suited to exploratory research such as this project.

2.4 In qualitative research it is not meaningful to report the number of participants expressing particular views or describing particular experiences. This is because of the small size of the sample and the purposive way in which it is selected (described below). Also in focus groups not every participant is asked to comment on every issue. Therefore only a very broad indication of prevalence is possible in terms of overall recurrence of issues and the factors underpinning them.

- 2.5 Great care needs to be taken when generalising from qualitative research². The methodological annex (Annex A) highlights features of the research design that may limit the inferences that can be drawn. For validation, we would refer readers to the findings from the leisure and tourism literature review (see Annex B) and the other projects in Defra's 'public understanding of sustainability' research programme. These are broadly consistent with the findings from this project.
- 2.6 Focus groups are useful when discussing issues that participants may not have given much thought to before, such as sustainable leisure and tourism. Comments from one participant can prompt others to have ideas that would not have occurred to them outside the group context. Focus groups may also be useful when information that is new to participants is presented.

Selection and recruitment of participants

- 2.7 14 focus groups were carried out, six on leisure and eight on tourism, with 108 participants in total. The location and composition of the groups were planned to ensure that a wide range of views and experiences would be heard. Participants who had not taken a day trip/holiday recently, had not flown recently for environmental reasons, or had no interest in the environment (Defra's 'disinterested segment' as defined in Annex A) were not recruited. There were in fact many participants in the sample with very little interest in the environment (but they were classified as 'long term restricted' or 'basic contributors' according to Defra's as defined in Annex A). It was felt that communication and behaviour change strategies would be more effectively focused elsewhere in the immediate future: the needs of these other parties will be clarified in ongoing Defra research. Participants were recruited by a professional recruiter working to a quota set by the research team (see recruitment questionnaires in Annex D).
- 2.8 The groups were held in the north, south east and south west of England; rural, urban and suburban areas (leisure groups); and areas differing in the size and proximity of airports (tourism groups). There were separate groups for high and low income households, using housing tenure as a rough proxy

² A list of key principles for generalising from qualitative data is provided by J Ritchie and J Lewis (2003) 'Generalising from Qualitative Research' in J Ritchie and J Lewis *Qualitative Research Practice: A Guide for Social Science Students and Researchers*. London: Sage Publications.

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for income. All groups included men and women, a range of ages (except one group composed of 16 to 21 year olds), participants with different levels of activity and views about environmental issues (except one group composed entirely of 'green activists' as defined in Annex A), different day trip or holiday frequencies, and different recent holiday destinations (tourism groups). Although still within the recruitment target, overall in the leisure focus groups there were considerably more women than men and almost half of participants had made 11 or more outings in the last year.

Procedure and material

2.9 In the focus groups, participants were asked about the following issues (see topic guides in Annex E):

- day trips/holidays they had taken recently and would like or dislike to take
- perceived impacts of leisure/tourism, particularly environmental impacts
- willingness to change leisure/tourism in line with Defra's behaviour goals
- responsibility for reducing the environmental impacts of leisure/tourism
- requests for government and industry
- level of activity and concern in relation to environmental issues in general

2.10 The moderators directed the discussion so it broadly followed the order of issues shown above. Participants were encouraged to talk freely around the issues, rather than being asked a series of preset closed questions.

2.11 A set of photographs showing various destinations and activities were presented to the participants. In the tourism focus groups the photos were of the following (see Annex F): Australia wine tasting, Caribbean cruise, Cornwall beach holiday, Edinburgh city break, EuroDisney, France skiing, Greece beach holiday, Nepal trekking, New York city break, Paris city break, Scotland golf, and Thailand beach holiday. In the leisure focus groups, the photos were of the following (see Annex G): bird watching, Blackpool, country

house, farmers market, football match, Glastonbury, Lord Mayors Parade, museum/art gallery, picnic in park, shopping centre, walking in countryside.

- 2.12 Participants were asked to sort them into groups, first by desirability and later by environmental impact, and then to explain their thinking. The card sort helped to stimulate discussion about environmental impacts.
- 2.13 To see if information changed participants' views, they were told about the impact of travel to different destinations by different modes of transport towards the end of the focus groups (Annex H and Annex I). The information was presented in terms of tonnes of CO₂ emitted from the journey and in terms of light bulb weeks i.e. how long a 100W light bulb would have to be left on to emit the same amount of CO₂ as the journey³.

Data analysis and reporting

- 2.14 The focus groups were digitally recorded and transcribed verbatim. Information from the transcripts was systematically sorted and recorded in thematic matrices. The matrices were examined to identify key issues; find explanations for particular views; note where differences or consensus existed among participants; and suggest how differences may relate to the characteristics of participants.

³ This information was drawn from a number of sources:

- Information on CO₂ emissions from flying were taken from www.climatecare.co.uk
- Information on CO₂ emissions from driving and train journeys were taken from Defra (2005) Guidelines for company reporting on greenhouse gas emissions
- Information on CO₂ emissions from Eurostar were taken from Eurostar's website www.eurostar.com

The conversion factor for light bulb hours was provided by the Energy Saving Trust (a 100W lightbulb on for 1 hour uses 0.1kWh, associated with 0.043 kg CO₂).

3 Environmental issues in leisure and tourism choices

Summary

On the whole, participants did not think about the environment when making leisure and tourism choices. There were five main reasons.

(1) Leisure and tourism were not seen as environmental behaviours. These behaviours were mainly concerned with fulfilling participants' own needs or their family's needs.

(2) Participants focused on the tangible environmental impacts of leisure and tourism, such as litter and pollution. Other environmental impacts were not widely mentioned and were generally not well understood. Participants mentioned several misconceptions, for instance

- Small everyday actions to help the environment such as reusing carrier bags have a greater impact than making changes to leisure/tourism
- Holiday activities have a greater impact than travel
- Long haul flights are only marginally worse than short haul

(3) Some participants were not concerned about the impacts, particularly the less tangible ones such as global warming.

(4) Some participants saw no point in changing their leisure or tourism behaviour unless other people or other countries reduced their environmental impacts too.

(5) Participants objected to making changes for the sake of the environment, feeling that

- It impinged on their right to do whatever they wanted with their leisure or tourism. This entitlement to holidays and a lesser extent day trips was very strongly expressed and was thought to justify lack of attention to environmental impacts.
- It was something peculiar that only serious environmentalists would do.
- It would simply make their day trip or holiday less enjoyable.

Participants were more willing to change their everyday behaviour than leisure or tourism behaviour. They believed changing everyday behaviours was more effective for addressing environmental issues and a smaller sacrifice.

Introduction

3.1 This chapter looks at:

- The extent to which participants considered the environment when making leisure and tourism choices
- Whether participants viewed leisure and tourism as environmental behaviours
- What participants understood about sustainable leisure and tourism
- How concerned participants were about the environmental impacts of leisure and tourism
- Whether participants felt it was worth their while to make sustainable leisure and tourism choices
- Whether participants found it acceptable to make sustainable leisure and tourism choices

3.2 In the focus groups participants discussed the impacts of leisure and tourism and sorted photographs of leisure and tourism destinations and activities according to their environmental impact. They described what they did in their day to day lives to help the environment and how concerned they were generally about environmental issues. They talked about their willingness to change their leisure and tourism behaviour for the sake of the environment and explained their feelings about this issue.

Taking the environment into account

3.3 There was widespread agreement among participants that they did not think about the environment when making leisure and tourism choices. There were some exceptions, as discussed in chapters 4 and 5. For instance, the occasional participant had opted for rail instead of air travel to their holiday destination, had decided to take more UK holidays, or had made a point of

contributing to the local economy while on holiday. This chapter sets out the reasons why such choices were far from mainstream.

- 3.4 It is important to note that members of the public who had not flown recently for environmental reasons were not included in the focus groups. By definition, this group of consumers do pay attention to the environment when making tourism choices.

Viewing leisure and tourism as environmental behaviours

- 3.5 On the whole, the environmental impacts of leisure and tourism simply **did not cross participants' minds**. Participants generally did not frame these behaviours as environmental behaviours, alongside recycling and turning off lights and electrical equipment. However, participants recognised a few environmental behaviours from everyday life, such as re-using carrier bags and cutting down on car use, that crossed over into leisure and tourism.
- 3.6 Instead participants saw leisure and tourism as mainly concerned with fulfilling their own needs or their family's needs. The wider impacts were simply not relevant. Not only did participants disregard the environmental impacts, but they also paid little heed to the economic and social impacts. Even participants who thought the consequences could be seriously detrimental (*"like a tsunami"*, *"dire"*), gave little attention to them.

"You don't think about that when you're getting ready to go out. It's about what fun you're going to have, that's the main factor." (Woman, under 30, basic contributor, Leeds, leisure focus group)

"You just take it for granted. You want to see this or you want to go there. You don't really think about the country, the economy, the environment at all. You just get on the plane, buy what you want to buy, take the kids wherever. You don't really think about what it is actually doing." (Woman, 30-60, green activist, Watford, tourism focus group)

- 3.7 Participants did, however, think of the impacts when it was possible they **could affect their leisure or tourism experience**. For instance, a woman said she would not want to go somewhere that was full of coach parties:

"You're not bothered that the coaches are polluting the air [but] you're bothered about the loads of people that are going to do your head in while

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you're there." (Woman, under 30, basic contributor, Manchester, tourism focus group)

- 3.8 When made to think about the impacts of leisure and tourism in the focus groups, some participants commented that they would never travel anywhere if they ordinarily thought about them (*"if you did you wouldn't go on holiday – you wouldn't leave your house"*). In fact, even after discussing the issues these participants were prepared to make only limited changes to their behaviour for the sake of the environment. However, their comments seem to demonstrate the discomfort felt when facing the consequences of their leisure and tourism decisions (*"It might take some pleasure out of it, put a damper on it maybe."*).

Understanding of sustainable leisure and tourism

- 3.9 Participants were asked to describe the impacts of leisure and tourism and to compare the size of impacts from different sources. The photographs used in the card sort (see point 2.11) provided examples to stimulate discussion. The discussion therefore focused on these examples (for instance EuroDisney and Blackpool) but also covered related activities (such as other theme parks).
- 3.10 There was a great deal of uncertainty among participants when discussing these issues. Even the knowledgeable participants, who knew what some of the impacts were, had trouble when it came to assessing their relative impact.
- 3.11 Towards the end of the focus group, participants were given information about the relative size of environmental impacts associated with different leisure and tourism behaviours. The purpose of this was to see whether participants would change their behaviour in the light of changes to their understanding. The findings are discussed in chapter 6.

What are the perceived environmental impacts of leisure and tourism?

- 3.12 While the environmental impacts of leisure and tourism were not at the front of participants' minds, with prompting they were able to suggest a number of issues. Some environmentally aware participants thought of impacts more readily and suggested a wider range. Overall, social and economic impacts tended to come to mind before environmental impacts
- 3.13 The core environmental impacts of **leisure** that were **mentioned repeatedly**

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were **litter, congestion and air pollution**. Other environmental impacts were not as widely mentioned. These included the negative impacts on:

- **noise pollution** e.g. from traffic and crowds at football matches
- **waste** associated with packaging and plastic bags from shopping
- **water resources** e.g. visitors adding extra strain during times of water shortage
- **biodiversity** e.g. walkers digging up bluebells
- **landscape** e.g. erosion from too many walkers or from mountain bikes
- **energy/fossil fuel supplies** e.g. due to the amount of energy used to light up in shopping centres
- **global warming** e.g. theme parks contributing to the problem

3.14 For **tourism**, mention was made of a similar range of issues. Participants **focused particularly on litter and air pollution**. They also discussed the negative impacts on:

- **traffic**
- **water pollution and water resources** e.g. with new building increasing the risk of floods and tourists adding to the problem of water shortages in Australia
- **biodiversity** e.g. coral reefs being damaged in Egypt, deforestation in Nepal, and airport expansion destroying habitats in the UK
- **landscape** e.g. loss of farmland to make space for hotels and leisure facilities, and coastal areas becoming built up and unattractive
- **energy/fossil fuel supplies** for instance with energy being “wasted” for instance to run resorts and theme parks
- **global warming**

3.15 There was some disagreement whether littering had increased or decreased recently. Participants who believed it had decreased put this down to a number of factors ranging from more bins to stronger social norms on the

issue. It was also suggested that less litter resulted in a virtuous cycle (*“If you see loads, please tend to chuck more on whereas if it’s tidy then more people are responsible”*).

How are leisure and tourism perceived to impact on global warming?

- 3.16 The focus groups were peppered with the language of environmental issues, particularly references to *“global warming”* and *“emissions”*. Understanding of the concepts varied a great deal across the sample but on the whole they were poorly or superficially understood.
- 3.17 Participants knew what global warming was. Some participants understood that it was affected by, for instance, using electricity to light up theme parks or fuel to drive there. However, other participants had **little understanding of the mechanism linking global warming to leisure, tourism** and human activity in general. They sometimes muddled it up with other environmental issues that they had heard of. For instance, when asked to say what she meant by global warming, a young woman in Brighton explained:
- “Well I don’t really know. Just the effects of our everyday lives in terms of pollution. How everything we do [like] recycling affects the planet. Obviously that’s why we’ve got blistering hot days and tomorrow it could be snowing for all we know. It just affects the ozone layer and all that sort of thing.”* (Woman, 16-21, basic contributor, Brighton, tourism focus group)
- 3.18 Participants generally **did not understand the role of carbon dioxide**. When they talked of emissions or even carbon emissions, they generally meant dirty exhaust fumes (*“toxic fumes”*, *“If a train is electric then it won’t give out any emissions, surely?”*). This confusion seemed to be due, at least partly, to thinking that carbon emissions were the same as emissions tested in MOTs (*“we have to be tested for emissions on our taxis”*).
- 3.19 However, there were participants with a clear understanding of global warming. For instance:
- “The greenhouse gas is carbon dioxide which is a product of any fuel that is burnt and that causes the greenhouse effect. All fuel that we use, aeroplanes, cars, trains, you use up energy and you burn the fuel and you produce greenhouse gases.”* (Man, 30-60, consumer with conscience, Watford,

tourism focus group)

How do the perceived impacts of leisure/tourism and everyday activities compare?

- 3.20 There was an widely held belief that **small everyday environmental actions had a greater impact than changing leisure or tourism behaviour**, mainly because they were done more often (*“a little difference everyday from everyone, will make a huge difference”*). This view was even held by more knowledgeable participants (in consumer with conscience and green activist environmental segments). For instance, a frequent flyer who made the most of living close to Bournemouth airport believed that reusing carrier bags, changing to low energy light bulbs, and insulating his home were more important for the environment than changing his holiday behaviour. Although this consumer with conscience had a sophisticated understanding of environmental issues he had little feel for the relative impacts of everyday and tourism behaviour.
- 3.21 Some participants concluded that there was no need to make environmentally aware leisure and tourism choices if they carried out other environmental actions instead. They felt that by recycling, for instance, they earned the right to fly (*“at least I [recycled] those two bottles so I won’t feel as bad when I get on the plane”*). There were, however, participants who expressed doubts or realised they would have to do a great deal to outweigh the effect of their holidays.

How do the perceived impacts of travel and activity compare?

- 3.22 In the **tourism** focus groups, there were **mixed views about which component of holidays, travel or activity, was more important** in determining environmental impact. When asked to rate a number of holidays according to their environmental impact, no one approach was dominant. One set of participants considered both travel and activity. Another set focused on travel, for instance sorting holidays by whether they can be reached without flying. The final set focused on activity. For instance, one participant suggested that the city breaks in Edinburgh, Paris and New York were more problematic than the beach holidays in Cornwall, Greece or Thailand.

- 3.23 Even participants with an in-depth knowledge of environmental issues (in green activist, currently constrained and consumer with conscience segments) made this mistake. For instance, a green activist with a longstanding interest in environmental issues was able to reel off a lengthy list of potential impacts from tourism. However, when sorting holidays by environmental impact, he did not think about travel at all and only sorted on the basis of activity. This demonstrates a disconnect between understanding the relative size of the environmental impacts from holiday travel and activity.
- 3.24 Participants were very aware of the air pollution, congestion and parking problems associated with driving to **leisure** activities. The environmental impact of the activities themselves, such as the electricity used for the Blackpool illuminations, was also seen as important. However, no attempt was made in the leisure focus groups to find out which component, travel or activity, participants believed had the greater impact.

How do the perceived impacts of different travel methods compare?

- 3.25 When asked to order travel methods according to their environmental impact, participants tended to think that trains were low impact. However, there were mixed views about the relative impacts of planes, cars, buses and boats. A number of factors influenced participants' thinking.
- 3.26 **Cars** Cars were viewed negatively because, unlike the other modes of transport, each could **only carry a few people**. However, it was pointed out that trains and buses were often **fairly empty** (*"I get five in my car and there's many times you see a bus going down the street with five people in it."*)
- 3.27 **Planes** Planes were generally thought to be **fuel intensive**. This was partly because of their size and partly because they would need a lot of fuel *"to get off the ground and to actually get in the air."* However, it was suggested that once in the air they did not use much fuel. On the plus side planes produced **pollution at some distance** (*"aeroplanes are right up there [so] by the time it gets down to us it's pretty diluted"*). This was generally of less concern than street-level pollution from cars and buses, although not always (*"[planes] put ozone in the atmosphere at the wrong level"*). Therefore proximity to pollution was important: the more distant, the less the concern.
- 3.28 **Boats** Like planes, boats were said to **use a lot of fuel** because they were

large. There was concern about the **pollution they created at sea**, with participants generally believing that cruise ships emptying waste into the water.

3.29 **Buses** There were complaints about **bus fumes**. Some participants believed that diesel was very polluting or that controls on pollution from buses were lax compared to controls on cars.

3.30 **Trains** In contrast, trains were seen as less polluting than the other forms of transport because they relied on electricity and **did not emit visible pollution** (*"If a train goes down the track you don't really see anything coming out of it so you just assume there is nothing wrong with it."*). However, participants with a more sophisticated understanding of environmental issues pointed out that there was pollution associated with producing electricity:

"If it's an electric train, doesn't it depend on how the electricity is produced? If it's coal-fired electricity, it's very damaging. If it's nuclear, zero carbon content." (Man, 30 to 60, consumer with conscience, Bournemouth, tourism focus group)

3.31 There was growing awareness that planes have a large impact on the environment. Participants mentioned that they had had a high media profile recently (*"the media are speaking about planes, planes, planes"*) and explained that they had therefore only just become aware of the issue.

3.32 However, even some participants who realised that planes were problematic were surprised by just how large the impacts of flying were. When given information about carbon emissions associated with flying to Paris and Australia, they described them as *"shocking"* and *"frightening"*.

3.33 Conversely some participants responded with surprise to the comparisons between cars and planes, expecting that the impacts from planes would be much greater. They found it strange that flying could emit less CO₂ than the same journey with one person in a car. Similarly, some participants expressed surprise to find that travelling by train could emit more CO₂ than the same journey in a full car.

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How do the perceived impacts of travelling to different destinations compare?

- 3.34 When rating holidays by environmental impact, there was **some recognition that travelling to long haul destinations had a greater impact** than staying closer to home. Some participants explained that this was because going abroad generally involved flying while others explained that the further they travelled, the greater the impact.
- 3.35 However, there was a **misconception that long haul flights were not that much worse than short haul ones**. For instance, a motor mechanic believed that flying to Thailand, rather than Paris, would use more fuel but not that much more because most was used in take off and landing (*“When a plane’s up cruising up in the air, it doesn’t actually burn too much fuel.”*) Again this reinforces that participants do not have an understanding of the relative size of environmental impacts associated with different behaviours.

How do the perceived impacts of different activities compare?

- 3.36 When discussing the environmental impacts of different activities, participants focused mainly on energy use, litter and pollution. These were the common threads running through discussions about both tourism and leisure. Activities in busy settings involving crowds were seen as worse on all three fronts.
- 3.37 In the **leisure** activity card sort, there was general agreement that **walking in the countryside, having a picnic in the park, and other outdoor activities such as bird watching, had a low environmental impact**. Participants explained that these activities were quiet and natural (*“you don’t plug anything in”*), were not usually done in crowds and did not need to involve cars or any transport.
- 3.38 In contrast, there was general agreement that **visiting shopping centres and theme parks had a high environmental impact**. Participants said that these activities were artificial, used a great deal of electricity, and involved large numbers of people and cars, with the associated litter, congestion and fumes. Shopping also generated plastic bags that would be at best reused or at worst thrown away while football and Glastonbury created noise pollution as well as the other impacts resulting from crowds.
- 3.39 Participants acknowledged that the impact of activities depended on **how**

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considerately they were carried out. For instance, if litter was left after a picnic or if large numbers of people walked in one area these activities would be high impact; if plastic bags from shopping were recycled this activity would be lower impact.

3.40 Some participants looked at the issue from unusual angles. For instance, it was suggested that:

- Going to watch football is not all that different from being at home (*“maybe have a hamburger, hot-dog and a drink, which you’d be doing anyway”*)
- Leisure activities in places built for that purpose, such as museums, galleries and country houses, would have a lower impact because the infrastructure is there to make sure that there is minimal damage.

3.41 In the card sort of **tourist** activities, participants fairly consistently picked **EuroDisney, city breaks, and cruises as high impact.** For the first two, they talked about the amount of electricity used, the pollution produced, and the rubbish left by crowds of people. When thinking about the cruise, they worried particularly about sewage and other waste going into the ocean.

3.42 As with leisure, consideration was given to whether places were created specially for tourism. On the one hand it was argued that if something had to be built, such as resorts or ski slopes, this caused a negative impact on wildlife and the wider environment. On the other hand, it was said that less damage was caused by visiting places that were geared up for tourism, than those that were not. In a similar vein, it was suggested that one more person going to a city or to EuroDisney would not make much difference.

3.43 The negative impacts of golf courses were rarely commented on, perhaps because they were the ones that participants were less aware of i.e. on biodiversity and water (see point 3.9). **Going trekking or sitting on a beach tended to be seen as harmless activities.** However, echoing comments in the leisure focus groups, these activities could have a greater impact if done by large numbers of people or if done thoughtlessly, with litter left behind.

Concern about environmental impacts

Global warming

- 3.44 There was a difference of opinion about whether global warming was a cause for concern. Participants fell into three sets.
- The first set was **concerned**. They were already seeing changes that they thought were due to global warming. However, they tended to fear for their children or grandchildren, rather than worrying for themselves:
“They say by 2020 or something it’s just going to be horrendously hot. My kids are only 4 and 2. It’s definitely going to have an impact on them.”
(Woman, 30 to 60, currently constrained, Chipping Sodbury, leisure focus group)
 - The second set was **not concerned**. They argued that any global warming happening at the moment would **not have a significant impact in their lifetime**; was part of a **natural cycle** (*“we’ve had severe weather like this before, it’s nothing new”, “there were times when we’ve had vines over England growing in open areas”*); or would result in **changes for the better** (*“me being selfish, I like the nice warm weather”*).
 - The last set simply felt **confused**. They explained that they had received mixed messages (*“we’re bombarded with so much information and a lot of it is conflicting”*) and did not feel sufficiently expert to know what to believe.
- 3.45 The three sets were not completely clear cut and there were participants who fell in between, such as a woman who believed that global warming was partly natural but that human activity was accelerating it; and another who thought it was happening but was not as bad as people were being told.
- 3.46 Level of concern did not seem to be related to any particular personal characteristics. While older participants were concerned for future generations, there seemed to be no greater sense of urgency among young people themselves. For instance, a 21 year old explained *“it’s not really your responsibility because you’ll never be here to witness it.”*
- 3.47 Some participants mentioned the effect of global warming on tourism, pointing out that there would be less snow at ski resorts and that some holiday

destinations might become uncomfortably hot in the future. It was suggested that if consumers understood that **their tourism behaviour now could lead to fewer holiday opportunities in the future**, they would be more concerned. This seems highly plausible, given that participants paid more attention to the impacts of leisure and tourism when it affected their experience (see point 3.7).

Other impacts

- 3.48 Participants who were not concerned about global warming were sometimes concerned about other environmental impacts of leisure and tourism, particularly more tangible ones. For instance, a man in Leeds doubted whether global warming was a problem but worried about the air pollution produced by traffic.

Value of making sustainable leisure and tourism choices

- 3.49 Some participants felt it was not worth their while to try to reduce the environmental impacts of their leisure or tourism. This seemed to be a greater issue for tourism than leisure.
- 3.50 Two reasons were given. The main reason was that participants felt strongly there was **no point in individuals taking action if other people or other countries continued to behave inconsiderately**. These views were expressed across a range of environmental segments, mainly by participants with some interest in environmental issues (wastage focused, consumer with conscience, currently constrained) but not by green activists.

“[If] there’s other people going to Australia, it just makes you think why am I holding myself back?” (Man, under 30, currently constrained, Bournemouth, tourism focus group)

“What I can do is just a drop in the ocean. If the Chinese are opening the equivalent of one coal-fired power station every week, what chance have I got?” (Man, 30-60, consumer with conscience, Manchester, tourism focus group)

- 3.51 It was also said that it was **simply too late to take action** because damage to the environment had gone too far to be reversed, although this was an unusual view:

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“You probably won’t be able to ski in the French Alps in 25 years time because there probably won’t be any snow there... I would say the way we are living now you should do as much as you can while you still can.” (Man, under 30, consumer with conscience, Manchester, tourism focus group)

- 3.52 In several focus groups, there was heated debate about whether individuals should take action, even if others did not. Some participants believed in principle that it was important to *“do their bit”* irrespective although they were more willing to follow this principle for everyday environmental behaviours than for leisure and tourism, as discussed below.

Acceptability of making sustainable leisure and tourism choices

- 3.53 Participants had three objections to changing their leisure or tourism behaviour for the sake of the environment.
- 3.54 Firstly, it was argued that **people should be able to do whatever they want** with their leisure and tourism, without having to consider the environment. There was a very strong sense of entitlement to holidays and to a lesser extent days out. They were seen as a necessity (*“it keeps me sane”*) or something earned through hard work (*“a holiday is something you live for, work towards”, “I’ve worked hard for 40 years and I want to play hard and I don’t want any restrictions”*). Participants therefore felt that their lack of attention to environmental impacts was justified. Even a young woman who recognised that pollution was a problem explained:

“[It] might sound really selfish [but] I work the rest of the year so I have to go away and it’s costing me money so I’m going to have a good time. I’m not going to think ‘I’m not going to go there because of pollution or because of this or because of that’... I’m just going away and that’s it.” (Woman, under 30, basic contributor, Manchester, tourism focus group)

- 3.55 Secondly, pro-environmental leisure and tourism choices were sometimes seen as **less appealing or even a sacrifice** (*“they can’t expect everybody to give up everything”*). As can be seen in chapters 4 and 5, the motivations underlying leisure and tourism choices were personal benefits while helping the environment was not seen to have immediate personal benefits, besides guilt alleviation, hence the sense of sacrifice. Participants were much more willing to make changes to their everyday lives which would not feel like a

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“massive sacrifice” or “too much hardship” and in fact might not “do a thing to alter your way of life at all”.

- 3.56 However, as will be discussed in chapters 4 and 5, making sustainable choices was generally not felt to be a sacrifice by those who adopted these behaviours. On the whole, participants gave positive reasons for their choices, for instance enjoying holidays in England. Those who made these choices with the environment in mind tended to see them as double wins.
- 3.57 Finally, for some participants, making leisure or tourism choices with the environment in mind was **not seen as something people like them would do**. Some participants viewed it as **peculiar**. For instance, an older man was happy to recycle and turn off lights and appliances but did not do much else for the environment. He called people who would go so far as to change their leisure for the sake of the environment *“sad”* and explained that this was not something *“the ordinary man in the street”* would worry about. Other participants saw it as **worthy**. They said that not considering the environment made them feel *“guilty”* or *“selfish”* but it was **still not normative** for them to do so, as the quote below illustrates. However, some participants really felt that they should be taking the issues seriously in their leisure/tourism choices.
- 3.58 *“You should be more aware, you should be more conscious of it... We don’t think enough about the environment, definitely not, but we all want to do what everyone else is doing, visiting all these places.”* (Woman, 30 to 60, wastage focused, Bournemouth, tourism focus group)

Everyday compared to leisure and tourism behaviours

- 3.59 As discussed, participants generally believed that everyday actions to help the environment, such as reusing carrier bags, were less of a sacrifice and more effective than changes to their leisure or tourism behaviour. They gave several further reasons for preferring everyday pro-environmental actions:
- They knew they were **supposed to** recycle, turn off lights etc at home. This reinforces the point made earlier that leisure and tourism are not yet framed as environmental behaviours.
 - They were **paying** for energy used at home and therefore had an incentive to not waste it. This was not the case on holiday.

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- They felt more **in control** when carrying out pro-environmental activities at home. For instance, recycling bins in public places could be knocked over or left uncollected so their effort would be wasted.
- Everyday pro-environmental actions would become a **habit** and people would then do them everywhere, including on holiday. Some participants did indeed carry their everyday pro-environmental actions into their holidays or leisure, in particular waste reduction and recycling. However, other participants admitted to being careful with energy at home but not on holiday as they were not paying for it.

4 Leisure behaviour goals

Summary

Participants were fairly open to taking more of their leisure closer to home and would welcome more or better facilities locally. However, in some cases going further away added to the enjoyment of a day out. The main practical barriers to local leisure were lack of facilities and, to a lesser extent, limited knowledge.

While some participants were committed car drivers, others were willing or even keen to use public transport for their leisure. A number of obstacles would need to be addressed to encourage greater use of public transport, particularly high cost and inconvenient services. Participants realised that it was possible to buy low cost tickets if they booked in advance or travelled at certain times but this often did not suit them.

There were many and varied examples of combining several activities into a single trip. However, there was no clear view about whether combining could be encouraged. It could also prove counterproductive by encouraging reliance on cars, which make combining easier.

Popular leisure activities included those that Defra would like to encourage, such as walks in the countryside and picnics in the park, as well as those that may have a higher environmental impact. Participants seemed to feel that they should not have to change their choice of leisure activities for the sake of the environment but they were more open to doing the same activities with greater consideration.

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Introduction

4.1 This chapter looks at Defra's leisure behaviour goals:

- Making use of nearby leisure facilities (Defra's focus is on use of nearby green spaces but we report on leisure facilities in general, including green spaces)
- Travelling less often and combining travel
- Using cars less
- Choosing more sustainable activities (Two of Defra's behaviour goals are discussed together because they both relate to activity i.e. activities that contribute to the local economy and outdoor activities)

4.2 This chapter reports on the motivations and barriers for each of the behaviour goals in turn and the overall willingness to pursue each goal further. It also mentions requests for government or industry action that could facilitate each behaviour goal. These are discussed further in chapter 6.

4.3 In the focus groups, participants discussed their current and desired leisure. The discussion focused on leisure destination, frequency, travel method and activities. Participants were also asked what changes they would be willing to make to their leisure activities in order to help the environment. The focus was on day trips⁴ but participants touched on other leisure activities in the course of the discussion.

⁴ We defined day trips as activities that people did away from home that took at least ½ day but did not involve staying a night away from home. We included activities done locally and further afield; planned and spontaneous; done once, occasionally or regularly.

- **Making use of nearby leisure facilities**

Motivations for using nearby facilities

- 4.4 Environmental reasons did not feature **at all** in participants' decisions to stay close to home for their leisure activities. However, they gave three other reasons for using nearby facilities. Firstly, it was **easier** in many ways. For instance, a mother with a young child explained that she could manage a local shopping trip and still be back in time to pick her son up from school.
- 4.5 Secondly, using local facilities made leisure **less expensive**. This was mainly because there was no need to pay for travel (*"we just don't fancy travelling up to Manchester and places – football costs a fortune anyway"*). Discounts for local residents received just the occasional mention.
- 4.6 Finally, some leisure activities **did not warrant a journey**. They were not worth a trip in their own right and so would only be done locally or in combination with other activities (see below). Farmers markets, for example, fell into this category (*"at the shopping centre that I tend to go to they have one just in the car park"*).

Barriers to using nearby facilities

- 4.7 Participants sometimes travelled some distance for leisure simply because the necessary facilities were **not available locally**. These included specialist facilities like ice rinks as well as standard facilities such as swimming pools. Participants sometimes said they would prefer not to travel but felt forced to do so by the lack of local facilities for their chosen leisure pursuits.

"You're having to travel out to what other people take for granted. It's not unheard of that we drive our kids to York to take them swimming, to Doncaster to go ice skating, because there's nothing in Leeds itself. You have no choice but to. It isn't

- *on our doorstep.*” (Woman, 30-60, consumer with conscience, Leeds)
- 4.8 Where good leisure facilities were available locally, participants were tempted to stay and use them (*“I wouldn’t drive to a beach when I have one on my doorstep”*). Local green spaces were very highly valued, although parks close to home seemed to be used for brief outings rather than day trips.
- 4.9 However, participants did not always use the facilities that were available locally. There were several reasons for going elsewhere besides availability.
- 4.10 In some cases participants found **facilities elsewhere more to their liking**. For instance, a man in Brighton preferred to watch Arsenal play football (*“a great atmosphere at the old Highbury ground”*) than his local team. In other cases going elsewhere **provided some variety**. For instance, a keen shopper in Chipping Sodbury enjoyed going to Weston for a change (*“a huge variety of DIY shops, television shops, electrical shops, things that we haven’t got round here”*).
- 4.11 Long distance leisure **gave a sense of achievement**. A young man in Leeds explained that having driven four hours to watch a football match *“you just feel like you’ve taken the whole day up and you know you’ve done something worthwhile.”*
- 4.12 Some activities tended **only to be done some distance from home** as part of a day out. For example, a Brighton resident who had never been to the Brighton Pavilion even though it was on her doorstep explained *“If you’re going somewhere like that, you feel you have to plan a special day out.”*
- 4.13 Sometimes local facilities were **too popular**. Participants who did not enjoy crowds avoided them, choosing either to stay at home or to go further afield.
- 4.14 There were instances where facilities did exist locally but participants **did not know of them**. For example, in one Brighton focus groups, a participant drew others’ attention to the Hove Film Museum, demonstrating the value of local information provision. However, another Brighton resident treasured walks that were not well known and hoped they would remain well

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kept secrets.

Differences across the sample

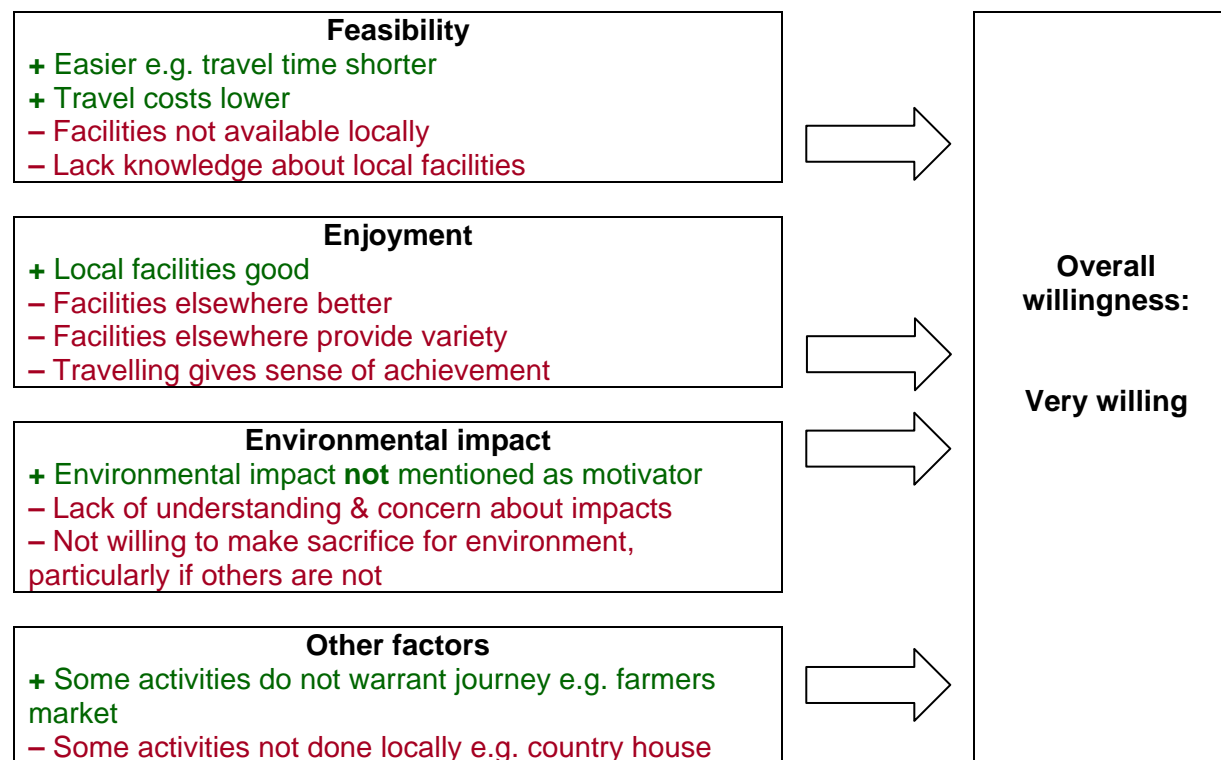
- 4.15 Whether participants favoured long distance or local leisure was unrelated to environmental segment. It seemed to have more to do with the following three factors:
- **Personal circumstances** Participants mentioned their own needs, their children's needs (*"they get irritated if they're in the car for more than hour"*) or their partner's needs (*"We don't go far, maybe go out for a couple of hours, then she goes 'I need to go home, I'm tired.'"*) to explain why they stayed close to home.
 - **Location** In the Brighton focus groups, participants repeatedly said that they did not need to go elsewhere because they had a good range of facilities nearby, ranging from shops and museums to beaches and the countryside, although there were still some facilities lacking and other reasons for taking leisure further afield. In contrast, in Chipping Sodbury, a small town between Bath and Bristol, the reverse was true. One participant even said that he had to drive to go for a walk in the countryside because of new housing development.
 - **Travel method** When participants cycled or walked to their leisure activities activity, they tended to mainly use facilities closer to home.

Suggestions for encouraging use of nearby facilities

- 4.16 Participants were open to spending more of their leisure time closer to home. To encourage this shift, they pointed out that good facilities would be needed and people would need to be told about them. Discounts on leisure facilities were also mentioned in passing (discussed further in chapter 6).
- 4.17 However, it was clear that these measures would only go part of the way to encouraging people to use nearby leisure

facilities. The improved provision of local facilities would not overcome some people's desire for leisure further away from home (*"that's our treat"*).

Figure 4.1 Factors affecting willingness to use nearby leisure facilities



Travelling less often and combining travel

Travelling less often

- 4.18 Some participants felt that they were already being forced to restrict their leisure activities because of the cost of travelling. For instance, a man complained that the high price of petrol meant he had cut back on his leisure which he felt was not fair. There seemed to be very little willingness to voluntarily travel less often for the sake of the environment. In fact, people said they would do their preferred leisure activities more often but were constrained by time and money.

Combining travel

- 4.19 Participants gave many and varied examples of **combining several leisure activities in a single trip**. In particular, they talked about “*making a day of it*” by adding together a number of activities. For instance, a man in Leeds described how he had gone to a shopping centre, had a meal and gone to a concert on a recent trip to Manchester.
- 4.20 Participants described two further ways of carrying out more than one leisure activity with just one journey. Firstly, families split up to do different activities at their destination. For instance, a woman described how on a trip to Cardiff her husband and one daughter had gone to watch a football match while she and her other daughter went shopping. Secondly, participants visited family or friends and had a day out at the same time.
- 4.21 There were instances of **combining leisure with work or chores**. This did not appear to be widespread but this may well have been because the focus groups focused on leisure lasting at least ½ day.
- 4.22 Leisure was combined with the working routine or with work trips. For instance, in Brighton a woman said she went to the gym at the end of the day at work while a man described how he “*craftily*” went bowling and shopping before a meeting in Portsmouth, thus getting his expenses paid.

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- 4.23 Similarly leisure was combined with regular chores or occasional ones. For instance, in Leeds a woman explained “*when I do my main shopping I’m already in the car taking the dog out anyway*” while a man explained that he went for a meal out when taking his wife to see the doctor in Huddersfield (“*it’s the same juice that’s getting used*”).

Differences across the sample

- 4.24 Opinions differed about whether combining leisure activities could be encouraged. Views seemed to be partly related to **environmental segment** and **personal circumstances** but also to personal **preferences**.
 - Some participants liked the principle (“*I’m a great believer in killing two birds with one stone or three birds if I can*”) and would be prepared to do so more (“*you’re more likely to combine than do without*”). **Wastage focused participants** were more likely than participants in other segments to report combining leisure with work or chores.
 - Others participants were less enthusiastic. While they were already combining leisure activities into days out, they felt that combining them with chores would be impractical or a bother. It was said to be particularly tricky for **people with children**. Therefore a suggestion that “*You could take them to the seaside and on the way back call in Tesco’s and do your shopping*” was met with laughter and a list of objections from the rest of the focus group.

Suggestions for encouraging combining

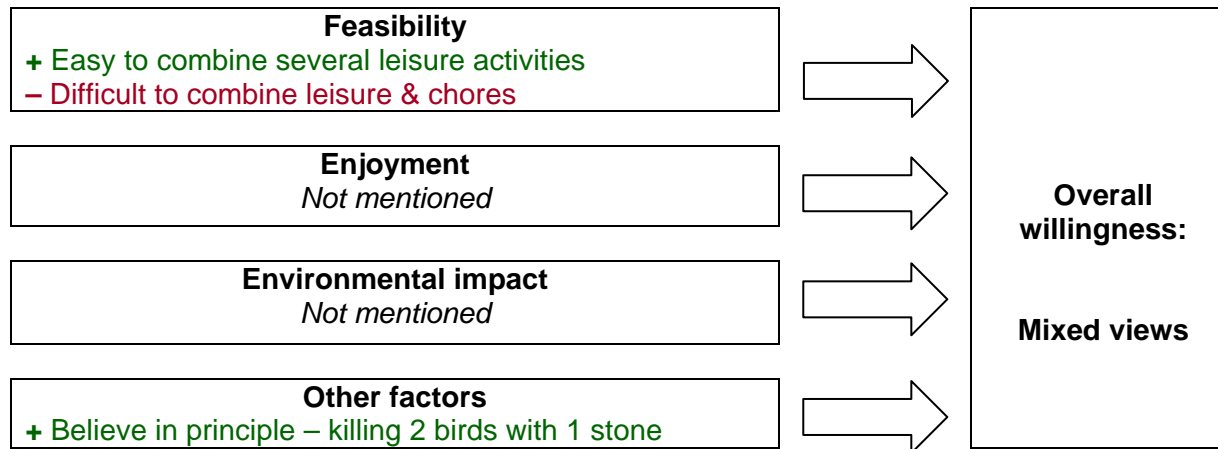
- 4.25 Combining several leisure activities into a single trip may not in fact be preferable from an environmental point of view for two reasons:
 - Encouraging people to combine travel could be counterproductive, if it also encourages driving. Sometimes combining activities was only possible with a car, although this was not always the case. For instance, a woman in Brighton had recently gone for a walk along the coast and could have caught there by bus. However, she had opted

to drive partly because it was easier but also because it allowed her to stop off for a pub lunch and then drive somewhere else for tea on the way home.

- It was not clear to what extent combining activities would actually mean that people travel less. At least some of the activities that participants chose to combine with their main activity were not activities they would have taken a separate journey for or taken up unless they were already making the trip. For example, a woman in Leeds who took her children to football practice on the weekend explained that she would sometimes combine this with a meal out (*“if we’re heading towards Harrogate, we’ll take a change of clothes and go and grab some lunch”*).

4.26 Nevertheless, it was suggested that more multi-purpose venues would encourage combining. A man in Leeds whose wife enjoyed shopping suggested that shopping centres could incorporate climbing walls, skiing and tobogganing facilities.

Figure 4.2 Factors affecting willingness to combine travel



- **Using cars less**

- 4.27 While discussing travel methods for leisure activities, participants raised issues to do with travel methods for other purposes. This report focuses as far as possible on the former.

Motivations for using cars less

- 4.28 Participants mentioned many advantages to using public transport for their day trips. **Low cost** was particularly important. Participants in Brighton praised the saver ticket for buses. Older participants appreciated their free bus passes and, to a lesser extent, discounts on train and coach tickets. For example, an older man in Brighton explained he had never used a bus before he got his free pass but did so frequently now. For car drivers, avoiding expensive parking was another plus.
- 4.29 Participants also commented that trains could sometimes be **faster** than driving because they avoided traffic jams, or could be **more convenient** because there was no need to park. Not having to drive could make a day trip more **relaxing**, allowing people to enjoy the journey itself or to have a drink while they were out. Public transport was seen as **fun**, particularly for young children and habitual car users and the journey could be made into part of the experience of the day, not simply the mode of transport.
- 4.30 Participants who cycled or walked to reach their leisure activities saw it as an opportunity to get some **exercise** and to lose weight. It was also felt to be a more **relaxing** way to travel:
- “You walk, you think, you integrate with society, you talk to people, you’re not frustrated in traffic jams, no parking tickets, no speeding tickets, it’s fantastic.”* (Man, over 60, wastage focused, Brighton)
- 4.31 There were participants who gave environmental reasons for opting not to drive on day trips. However, this reason was far from widespread and was just part of the story. For instance, an older man in Brighton had opted not to have a car for environmental reasons so he usually cycled when going bird watching, although a car would enable him to go bird watching

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further away. However, he explained that his decision was not entirely environmental as he also enjoyed the exercise.

Barriers to using cars less

- 4.32 As well as the advantages discussed above, participants mentioned many disadvantages to using public transport. Three issues came up repeatedly.
- 4.33 Firstly, the **high cost** of trains was a serious disincentive. It was felt particularly keenly by participants with families and it was pointed out that children pay full fare from a young age. Participants realised that it was possible to buy low cost tickets if they booked in advance or travelled at certain times but this often did not suit them. For instance, a woman in Brighton described how her friend had had to buy an expensive ticket to London because she needed to travel earlier than the cheap tickets were available.
- 4.34 Booking tickets well in advance would only be possible for some leisure activities. Participants explained that some activities needed to be planned well in advance, such as going to concerts as concert tickets needed to be bought. However, sometimes decisions were made just a day or two before or on the spur of the moment.
- 4.35 Secondly, participants found travelling by public transport **time consuming**. They objected to unexpected delays, convoluted journeys (*“[Buses] go all the way round the houses [and] there are no direct routes”, “go to so and so, change train there, get on another train...”*), and having to wait for buses or trains to arrive:

“I haven’t got that much time in my life to be messing around waiting for buses, waiting for trains, waiting for this, that and the other.” (Man, 30 to 60, consumer with conscience, Leeds)
- 4.36 Thirdly, participants considered public transport **inconvenient**. They complained that it sometimes did not pick them up or drop them off close enough to their home or their destination. It did not suit mothers with young children or people carrying bags of shopping or equipment such as fishing tackle.

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- 4.37 A number of other issues were raised as well as the above core concerns. Participants mentioned concerns related to
 - **Health** For example, a woman in Brighton worried that buses could be unhealthy (*“it was smelly and it was steamy – you think of all those germs”*).
 - **Safety** For example, a woman in Leeds found behaviour on public transport frightening: *“On buses people are rude and go over your feet and all sorts... I find people are too aggressive. I’ve had abuse on the bus, I’ve been called all sorts. And it scares you.”*
 - **Comfort** For example, a tinnitus sufferer found trains noisy and objected to the widespread use of mobile phones and laptops, even in quiet carriages.
- 4.38 Related to this point, participants spoke with feeling about **unpleasant experiences** on public transport. Some of these experiences were very recent while others had happened a few years back. For instance, a woman in Leeds described a journey to London on a coach where it had not been possible to turn the heating off, the traffic had been terrible, someone had had their iPod playing loudly, and the toilet could not be used after the first hour. Nevertheless, this did not seem to have put her off using this cheap and convenient service. In contrast, a woman in Brighton seemed to have been put off buses for good by unpleasant early morning commutes.
- 4.39 Public transport was **not conducive to combining several activities**, as discussed above. It was suggested that cars were preferable for spontaneous and flexible day trips (*“you might go somewhere and not want to come straight home”*) while trains were more suited to planned day trips because less expensive train fares often need to be booked in advance.
- 4.40 As well as the perceived disadvantages, **lack of knowledge** sometimes acted as a barrier to the use of public transport. No one said they had difficulties finding out about public transport. However, participants were surprised to learn of low prices or quick routes from others in the focus groups.

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- 4.41 As discussed above, the travel method sometimes became part of the leisure experience. While trains and buses were seen as **enjoyable** by some, cars also had their advocates. For example, a young man from Leeds who enjoyed taking long drives in the countryside explained that driving was his relaxing leisure activity and where he ended up was irrelevant.

Differences across the sample

- 4.42 Choice of travel method depended on a wide range of factors. Environmental segment did not seem to have an impact and was probably simply outweighed by the other factors. These ranged from local and personal circumstances, discussed below, to more idiosyncratic likes, dislikes and priorities and experiences.
 - **Location/destination** Unsurprisingly, participants explained that they were less likely to rely on cars where there was good quality public transport on the one hand and problematic traffic and parking on the other. On the whole participants did not take the car on days out in London because of the difficulty driving or parking when they got there. Participants living in the countryside in Chipping Sodbury were heavily reliant on their cars. In contrast, participants in Brighton were more inclined not to have cars at all or not to use them for their days out because the local bus service was generally seen as good quality and low cost while traffic and parking were very troublesome⁵.
 - **Personal circumstances** Participants' travel methods depended to some extent on their personal circumstances. Older participants were greatly encouraged to use buses by their free passes. Young children were said to enjoy public transport but this was generally outweighed by practical matters such as the hassle of travelling with prams and the cost of travelling on public transport with a large family.
 - **Preferences** Participants' priorities, particularly the weight they gave to cost and convenience, had an impact on how they choose to travel. For example, one participant in Brighton chose to take the coach from Brighton to London

⁵ Although most of the participants in the Brighton focus group had some interest in the environment (wastage focused, currently constrained, consumer with conscience, or green activist) this difference was not simply down to the make up of the groups. Participants from these environmental segments in Chipping Sodbury relied on their cars.

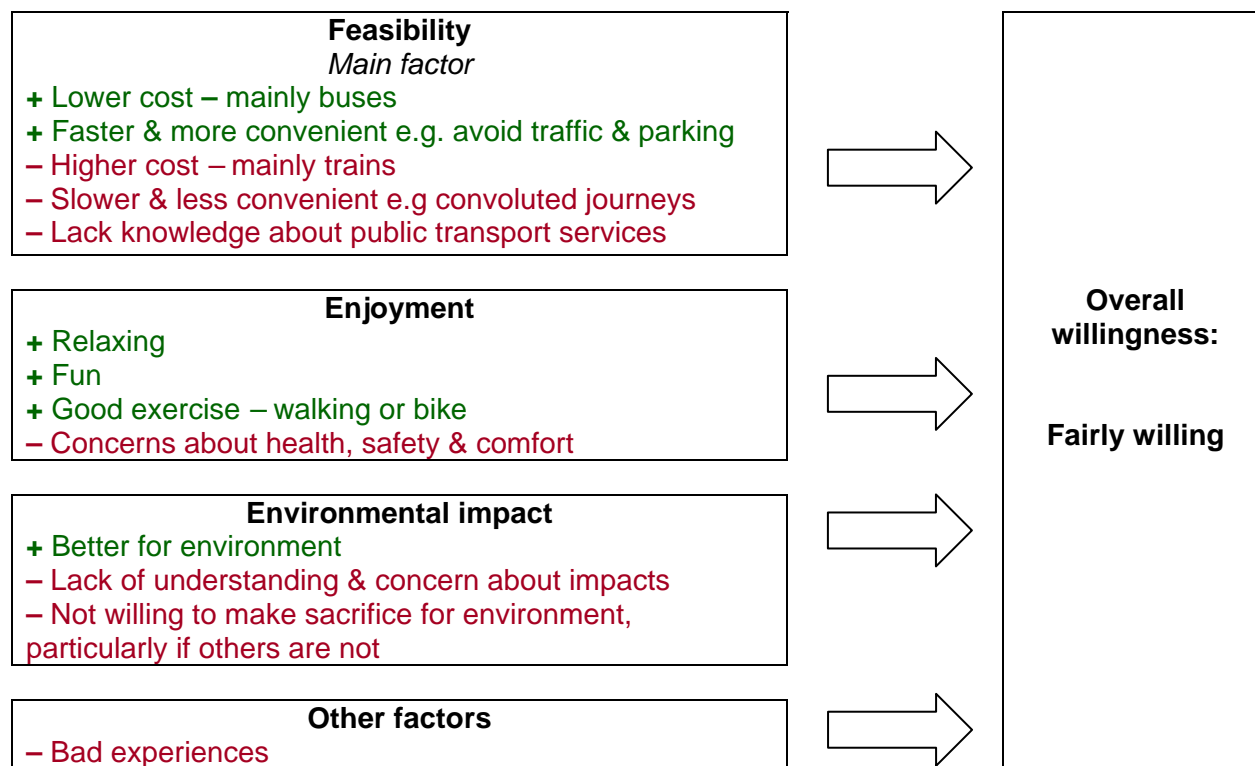
- because it was a lot cheaper, even though it took twice as long, while another participant in the same focus group opted for the train because of its speed (*“50 minutes and you’re there”*).

Suggestions for discouraging car use

4.43 While some participants were committed drivers, others were willing or even keen to use public transport for their leisure. They were disappointed that the cost was prohibitive or the services inconvenient for them. Participants said they would use public transport more if the cost came down, free passes for older people were extended to trains, or services were improved. Several other suggestions were made for discouraging car use (discussed further in chapter 6).

- Politicians and public figures set an example
- Provide information about the environmental impacts of travel methods
- Introduce road pricing or personal carbon allowances

Figure 4.3 Factors affecting willingness to use cars less



Choosing more sustainable activities

4.44 Defra wishes to promote several types of activities, as mentioned in the behaviour goals: activities that are outdoors, use green spaces, contribute to the local economy, and do not have a significant impact on biodiversity. This is what we mean by sustainable activities in this section of the report.

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Motivations & barriers to activities that contribute to local economy

- 4.45 **Going to shopping centres** was extremely popular. Keen shoppers reported travelling a considerable distance to shop (*“local-ish – within a 2hr radius”*) and they liked to do it frequently (*“every day if I could”*). They found it **interesting**, **satisfying**, and **relaxing**. However, it could be less than relaxing when very crowded on the weekend. The pleasure was sometimes about browsing, rather than buying.
- 4.46 Going to shopping centres had a wide appeal, attracting participants of all ages. It was said by some to be an activity that only women enjoyed but in fact some men admitted they liked it too, whether shopping for clothes, gadgets, electrical equipment or DIY. Participants with children tended to prefer to shop without them.
- 4.47 However, shopping centres were not universally liked. Participants who disliked them fell into two sets. The first set simply did not enjoy shopping, finding it **boring** or complaining of crowds. The second set **objected on principle** (*“I’m not a consumer... all those flashy things they’re trying to flog you”*).
- 4.48 More sustainable forms of shopping, such as **farmers market**, generally met with less enthusiasm than shopping centres. Participants tended not to travel to farmers markets, only visiting local ones or ones they happened to be passing. Some participants valued the principles behind farmers markets, feeling it was important to **support the local economy** or to buy local food for **environmental reasons**. However, comments generally centred around the **quality of the food** (*“it’s fresh, sometimes it’s organic, it does taste a lot different”*) or the **experience** (*“weird [things], like chilli chocolates”*). Participants sometimes did not distinguish between farmers markets, craft fairs, French and German markets in terms of their impacts because this was not the way in which they thought about them.
- 4.49 Participants mentioned a number of dislikes of farmers markets. Some found them **too small or too expensive**. Others generally **did not enjoy food markets** because of, for instance, the smells or the need to get up early to buy good quality food before it sold out.

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Motivations and barriers to outdoor activities

- 4.50 There were two sustainable activities that were well loved: walking in the countryside and picnics in the park.
- 4.51 **Walking in the countryside** was valued for many reasons. Participants talked of **the fresh air, the quiet and the scenery**. They appreciated the **exercise, relaxation, inspiration and escape** (*“get away from everything and forget about everything for a few hours”*). It was said that a walk in the countryside led to increased appreciation of the environment.
- 4.52 There were those who were **not keen on physical activity** (*“I’ve never been really one for walking”*) or were prevented from taking walks by disability and sometimes old age. They still enjoyed a drive or meal in the countryside. Others found the countryside **too quiet** and preferred to walk somewhere with more *“hustle and bustle”*.
- 4.53 While **picnics in the park** appealed for some of the same reasons as walking in the countryside, there were differences. Parks were seen as busier environments and picnics as more social activities, providing an opportunity to **spend time with family and friends**. However, the level of activity in parks put some participants off.
- 4.54 Participants with young children liked to take them somewhere outdoors where they could run around and tire themselves out. In some cases they opted for countryside and beaches, in other cases for man made places with more to see and do, such as theme parks or zoos.
- 4.55 For some participants, it was the **simplicity** of picnics and walks in the countryside that appealed. They hankered after uncomplicated, **old fashioned** leisure pursuits (*“trying to get back to basics [because] life is too technical”*). For example, an older man in Chipping Sodbury spoke of spending hours on Clifton Downs as a child, keeping himself entertained. He contrasted this with modern leisure: *“catalogues, hire purchase, Ebay... people have got lots of things to entertain themselves”*. This issue was not mentioned by younger participants.
- 4.56 Other outdoor pursuits such as bird watching and angling elicited mixed reactions. There were enthusiasts who spoke with

passion about their hobbies. However, other participants found them boring, felt they lacked the knowledge to enjoy them, or were not sufficiently interested to put in the necessary effort.

Differences across the sample

4.57 Choice of activity appeared to be related to environmental attitudes to some extent but more strongly to personal circumstances and preferences.

- **Personal circumstances** Age was sometimes said to have an impact on leisure activities with some older participants finding it hard to take walks in the countryside and some younger participants preferring to walk somewhere busier on account of their age. Children had a major impact on choice of leisure activity. Participants sometimes saw taking their children out on day trips as an important parental responsibility as it could be educational, good for their health or simply fun.
- **Preferences** On the whole, participants reported enjoying a range of leisure activities. Motivations included factors that pushed participants away from their home environment or pulled them towards a specific destination or attraction. In some cases, participants' choice of activities was eclectic. For instance, one man's leisure pursuits ranged from fishing to pop concerts while another enjoyed bowls, walks in the countryside, and shopping centres. In other cases, participants mentioned an underlying theme. For instance, a chef focused on outdoor activities, explaining "*work is quite busy and under pressure in a big kitchen, it's nice to get out in a big open space*". In contrast, a hard working carer did not like to sit still in her leisure time ("*I tend to only get Saturdays off so on a Saturday I tend to go wild really*").
- **Environmental attitude** Although there was no clear association between choice of activity and environmental segment, participants explained some of their leisure activity choices in terms of their environmental attitudes and principles. For instance, as discussed earlier some participants valued farmers markets for environmental reasons

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and the occasional participant avoided shopping centres because they were opposed to consumerism. Nevertheless shopping centres were popular, even with some participants with fairly strong environmental concerns (currently constrained). Conversely, even some participants with little concern for the environment took an interest in nature in their leisure activities.

Suggestions for encouraging sustainable leisure activities

4.58 There was some flexibility in participants' choice of leisure activities. Examples included going shopping with their partner or taking their children to theme parks although this would not have been their own preference. They also talked of the way their leisure activities had changed with age.

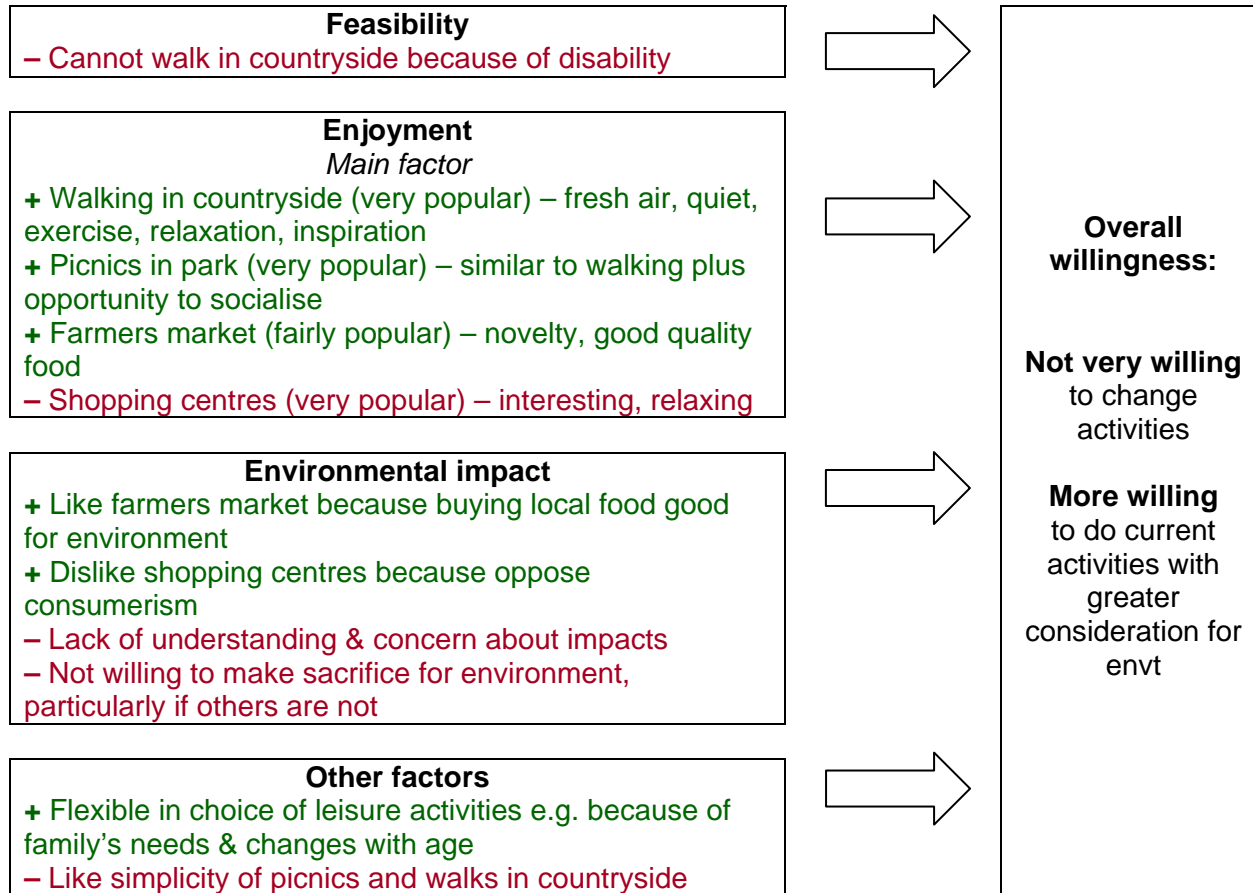
4.59 In spite of this flexibility, participants expressed strong resistance when it came to giving up or reducing less sustainable activities for the sake of the environment. For example, when asked what would make his wife, an enthusiastic shopper, give up shopping, an older man replied "*Death!*" A young woman felt similarly attached to her leisure pursuits:

"I'm not going to give up my football, my shopping, my theme parks... That's my pleasure. People aren't going to not go to a big mall because of pollution, no way." (Woman, under 30, currently constrained, Chipping Sodbury)

4.60 There were exceptions such as a woman who said that she would be prepared to cut down on activities if they had a "*high environmental cost*". She would not, however, cut them out altogether if her daughter wanted to do them, emphasising again the key role children play in choice of leisure activities.

4.61 Rather than change or give up cherished activities, there seemed to be more willingness to do the same activities but with greater consideration for environment. Although participants were not asked directly about this issue, there were instances of participants doing so already. For instance, they took bags to bring litter back in, took their own bags to car boot sales, and refused plastic bags when out shopping.

Figure 4.4 Factors affecting willingness to choose more sustainable activities



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5 **Tourism behaviour goals**

Summary

While some participants were resistant, there was considerable openness to taking more UK holidays, particularly short breaks rather than main holidays. The main appeal of domestic holidays was their ease. However, overseas holidays offered sunshine and experiences that could not be found in the UK, among other attractions.

Travelling by plane was something that participants took for granted and were willing to endure even if afraid. The recent advent of cheap flights had made overseas travel more affordable and participants were reluctant to give up the opportunities it offered. Nevertheless, there was some willingness to travel by train instead where practical, provided fares come down.

There was strong opposition to the idea of taking fewer longer holidays partly because of practical constraints and partly because several breaks give something to look forward to. However, special holidays or ones that require a long journey would justify consolidating several holidays into one.

As with leisure, there was evidence that participants would be willing to continue with their current range of activities but with greater consideration for the environment.

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Introduction

5.1 This chapter focuses on Defra's tourism behaviour goals:

- Focusing on UK as holiday destination
- Travelling less/combining travel
- Choosing more sustainable travel methods (Two of Defra's behaviour goals are considered together because they both relate to travel method i.e. reducing non-essential flying and using car less.)
- Choosing more sustainable activities (Three of Defra's behaviour goals are considered together because they all relate to activity i.e. increase outdoor activities, avoid commodities with significant impact on biodiversity, and contribute to local economy.)

5.2 This chapter reports on the motivations and barriers for each of the behaviour goals in turn and the overall willingness to pursue each further. It also mentions requests for government or industry action that could facilitate each behaviour goal. These are discussed further in chapter 6.

5.3 In the focus groups, participants discussed their current and desired holidays. The discussion focused on holiday destination, frequency, travel method and activities. Participants were also asked what changes they would be willing to make to their holidays in order to help the environment.

Focusing on UK as holiday destination

Barriers to UK holidays

- 5.4 Participants gave numerous reasons for choosing holiday destinations abroad. Firstly, they **wanted a change** and to do something different from their day to day lives (*“if you want to go away, you want to go away, see something that you don’t see every week here”*). This reason was even given by participants who went back to the same overseas destination many times. However, this was not always the case and some participants sought places that felt like home (*“Marbella is just sunny and everyone’s so happy but it’s just a similar kind of way of life [to] Manchester.”*)
- 5.5 Secondly, participants chose destinations that offered particular **activities or experiences they could not find in the UK**. Some participants found a holiday experience they liked and returned repeatedly. Other participants displayed wanderlust by looking for a one-off experience. *“I’ve never been before”* was a recurrent reason for wanting to visit a destination.
- “I always go to Ibiza every year in the summer... There is nowhere else to go in the world where you have got clubs like that.”* (Man, under 30, consumer with conscience, Manchester)
- “I’ve always wanted to balloon over the Ngorongoro crater in the Serengeti... go to Darjeeling on the trains... go trekking in Nepal... It’s a spectacle.”* (Man, 30 to 60, consumer with conscience, Bournemouth)
- 5.6 It was felt that the UK did not offer certain types of experiences. In particular, it did not appeal to participants with a sense of adventure (*“You’re not going to see the seven wonders of the world in England”*) or young participants. Parents also explained that going abroad was an education for their children.
- 5.7 Thirdly, participants chose holidays abroad for **the weather**. On the whole holiday makers sought sunshine and warmth (*“I don’t feel it’s a holiday if it’s not sunny”*) while skiers were looking for snow. Sometimes the weather was the only reason for travelling abroad. Holidays in the UK could not guarantee good weather:

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“For my proper holiday that I might save up for and look forward to and work towards, you never know what the weather’s going to be like [in England]. It’s too much risk.” (Woman, 16-21, basic contributor, Brighton)

- 5.8 Fourthly, holidays abroad were said to be **less expensive**, although this view was not universal. This was an obstacle particularly for families. For instance, a woman had looked into taking her three children to Centre Parcs but had found it very expensive, while another complained that eating out in the UK was more expensive than abroad making domestic family holidays unaffordable.
- 5.9 Fifthly, **family and friends overseas** played a large part in decisions about where to take holidays. In some cases, participants went mainly or solely for the purpose of seeing them. They even went to holiday destinations that would not otherwise have appealed. In other cases, they were delighted to know people living in places they wanted to visit.
- 5.10 Sixthly, UK holidays, particularly beach holidays, were seen as a **thing of the past**. Participants compared vibrant overseas holiday destinations (*“Dubai... is just a really up and coming place”*) with dying ones in the UK (*“a lot of UK holiday places are quite barren now, the seaside resorts”*).
- 5.11 Seventhly, some participants recalled **unpleasant childhood memories** of domestic holidays.
- “It reminds me of being a child when all we ever did was go in a caravan in Wales... It was always raining.”* (Woman, 30-60, basic contributor, Manchester)
- 5.12 Participants with children mentioned several additional factors. For instance, Europeans were **more welcoming of children** and European destinations felt **safer** than the UK so children could be given more freedom. This comment was made by women who felt Centre Parcs and Butlins were out of reach because of cost.
- 5.13 Young people’s responses to UK holidays varied. Some were enthusiastic; others spoke of them with disdain; and others were happy to take domestic holidays but would prefer to travel abroad. There were a number of obstacles for young people

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to taking holidays in the UK.

- Lack of suitable facilities and experiences. For instance: *“For people my age there isn’t anywhere – there are bars but you want other things to do as well.”*
- Lack of knowledge. For instance, a young man spoke knowledgably and enthusiastically about Australia. In contrast he said Edinburgh did not appeal but admitted he knew nothing about it.
- Negative perceptions: *“I’d rather be abroad, France or somewhere there’s a nicer culture, not associated with doner kebabs.”*
- The wish to *“get as far from their parents as possible”*.

Motivations for UK holidays

5.14 UK holidays had two distinct advantages over holidays abroad.

5.15 Firstly, there were participants who mentioned the **environmental advantage** of holidays in the UK. It was not generally their sole reason but was an important one. This explanation was given before the moderators or any of the other participants had mentioned environmental issues suggesting that the participant was not simply responding to normative influences.

5.16 Secondly, UK holidays were **easier** than overseas holidays. However, some participants who prioritised ease were just as happy to take short haul holidays as holidays in the UK. They just steered clear of long haul. For instance, a man explained that he chose destinations within three hours flying for holidays with his children (*“not too far away... England, Isle of Wight, Minorca, Cyprus.”*) Some older participants were also deterred from long haul travel by the discomfort.

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- 5.17 The other reasons participants gave for taking UK holidays overlapped with reasons for choosing holidays abroad. Participants wanted a change from home (*“Cornwall is so laid back [unlike] the city [where] everyone is rushing, rushing, rushing”*). They were keen to visit certain places in the UK in search of particular experiences (*“New York is just fantastic to me, the buzz that you get, but I get exactly the same buzz when I go to London”*). They preferred holidays in the UK because the climate suited them or did not see poor weather as an impediment to an enjoyable holiday. Finally, participants had family and friends to visit in the UK.

Differences across the sample

- 5.18 There was considerable openness to taking domestic holidays among the following three sets of participants:
 - **Participants who enjoyed UK holidays** This set of participants fell across the environmental segments. They included those who habitually took domestic holidays as well as those who did not such as a woman who had travelled extensively abroad in her youth and now welcomed the new experience of discovering the UK.
 - **Participants for whom ease was a priority** Ease was a particular selling point for participants with children but was not associated with any particular environmental segment. For instance a woman with two young children explained that since having them, the effort of travelling by plane had put her off overseas holidays:

“I could do a UK holiday, not forever, but if I didn’t go away for eight years it wouldn’t bother me too much.” (Woman, 30 to 60, basic contributor, Watford)
 - **Participants with environmental concerns** This set included participants from green activist, consumer with conscience, and wastage focused segments. Some had already made the move to more UK holidays while others were on the brink, reflecting the recent increase in awareness of the environmental impacts of flying (see chapter 3).

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Among this set of participants, limiting overseas travel was typically, but not always, viewed as a double win rather than a sacrifice.

“More and more I’ve done just one week in this country and maybe a week abroad rather than one or two holidays abroad... I think it’s just the realisation that it’s probably more environmentally friendly just to go in a car with two people in... It’s just realising that we have a beautiful country right on our doorstep. Rather than go abroad every time and use the planes.” (Man, over 60, green activist, Bournemouth)

“I’m thinking more about the damage that we all do when we fly by plane, especially on a long haul flight. So I’m thinking twice about that, much as I’d love to go to New York.” (Man, 30-60, wastage focused, Brighton)

5.19 However, some participants were resistant to focusing on UK holidays. There was least support among the following sets of participants:

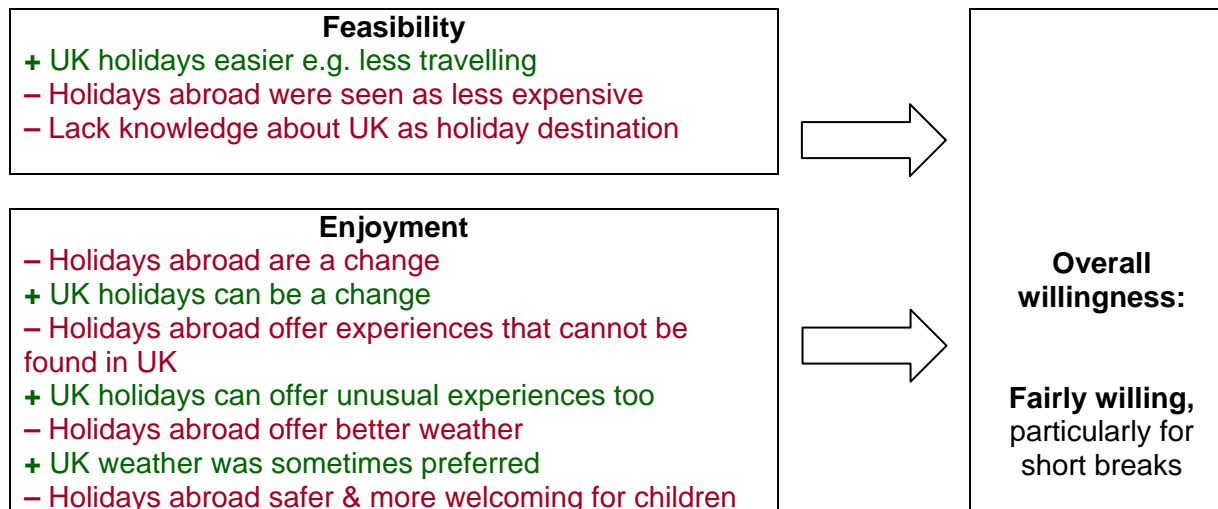
- **Participants who objected on principle** This set objected either on the basis that overseas travel is a right or that individual consumers or countries taking action unilaterally are ineffective (see chapter 3).
- **Participants with more practical objections** This set focused particularly on the higher perceived cost of UK holidays. This barrier was mentioned particularly by social housing tenants across a range of environmental segments.
- **Participants who wanted new experiences overseas** This set felt that they had not yet had the opportunity to make the most of overseas travel. Again this view was not associated with any particular environmental segment but was expressed strongly by
 - younger participants who aspired to see the whole world (*“I just want to go everywhere. I just want to experience everything”, “I just want to go round the whole world and come back to England when I’m like 50”*);

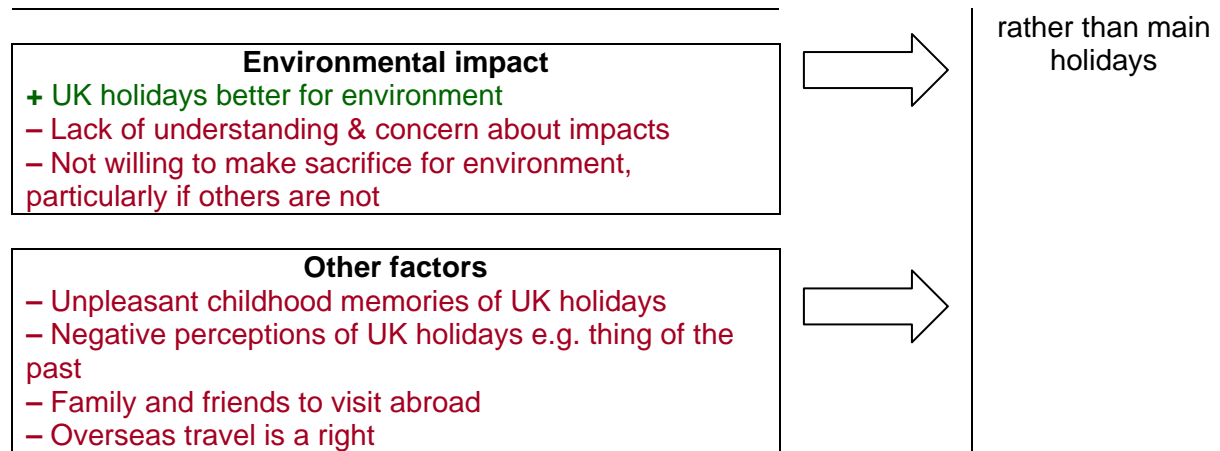
- participants on low incomes who had less ambitious aspirations (*“just to be able to say you have been to the other side of the world and enjoyed the experiences” “in a lifetime you don’t just want to spend it all in one island - obviously financially it is awkward but you hope that one day...”*)
- retirees

Conversely, focusing on UK holidays was seen as less of a sacrifice by the occasional person who felt they had had their share of seeing the world.

5.20 Participants with environmental concerns who did not wish to focus on UK holidays sought ways to resolve the conflict. They said they would use travel methods besides flying to reach their destination, make a point of eating out at their destination so that their tourism benefited the local people, travel less often (*“maybe I’ll just go once”*), offset, or *“feel a bit bad”*. They would therefore accept the other behaviour goals if it meant they did not have to curb overseas travel.

Figure 5.1 Factors affecting willingness to take UK holidays





Suggestions for encouraging UK holidays

- 5.21 Participants would be particularly likely to take short breaks, rather than their main holidays, in the UK. Even some who were not enthusiastic about taking holidays in the UK, were happy to take short breaks here. For instance, a young man explained that if he had a choice between Edinburgh and Thailand, he would choose Thailand but he would like to go to Edinburgh for a weekend, rather than his main summer holiday.
- 5.22 Participants made a number of suggestions for encouraging UK holidays (discussed further in chapter 6):
- Participants who were concerned about the cost of domestic holidays said they would be more open to taking them if the cost came down.
 - It was suggested that developing facilities for young people in the UK would help attract younger holiday makers, although this met with a mixed response.

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- Some participants wanted to be assured that their peers were taking action. Similarly they asked for a worldwide agreement to ensure that the UK was not acting along.
- They requested information on environmental impacts of travelling to different destinations.

Travelling less often/combining travel

5.23 Participants were asked whether they would be happy to combine several short holidays into one longer one to reduce the environmental impacts of travel. Combining holidays with visiting family and friends was widespread, as discussed above.⁶

Barriers to travelling less often/combining travel

5.24 There was **strong opposition** to the idea of taking fewer longer holidays for several reasons. Firstly, several breaks gave **something to look forward to** (*“otherwise it is done and over with and you have got to wait til next year”*). This view was firmly held and widespread.

5.25 Secondly, there were **practical constraints** to taking long holidays. These included fitting in with school holidays, not taking too long off work, not leaving homes unattended for long, bills mounting up to be paid during the holiday, and not being able to afford a long holiday (*“city breaks are affordable things to do if you can’t afford a long holiday”*). Younger participants and retirees were sometimes less constrained.

5.26 Finally, longer holidays could be **less enjoyable**. A number of issues were mentioned. For example, city breaks need to be short, people get bored, get itchy feet or annoy each other on long holidays.

⁶ Business travel was beyond the remit of this project so combining travel for business and pleasure was just touched on in the focus groups.

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Motivations for travelling less often/combining travel

5.27 Some participants did like the idea of a longer holiday. However, they admitted that if they were in a position to take longer holidays, for instance if time and money were no object, they would still want to take the same number, rather than taking fewer. Some retirees who were in this position agreed.

5.28 Nevertheless, three reasons were given for taking fewer longer holidays.

- Firstly, **travelling further justified longer holidays**. For instance, a man who went to Jamaica explained that he went for two weeks not one because travelling there took such a long time (*“if I’m going to be that long on a flight then I want to be there for a while”*).
- Secondly, **one special and expensive holiday** might be substituted for two ordinary and inexpensive ones. A woman described how her parents had decided just to go to Cuba this year rather than their usual two holidays (*“instead of going to Benidorm and Greece, we will have one decent holiday instead of two cheap holidays”*).
- Thirdly, participants talked about **saving up annual leave** or making the most of **long periods off work** to take *“special”* holidays. This approach was only practical in very unusual circumstances. For instance a young woman said she had to wait about 4 years to get four to six weeks off work in a block. She would like to do so to go to somewhere like Australia or South America. A man who took an extended holiday explained *“I was finished one job and I had a few quid”*.

Differences across the sample

5.29 There was very little willingness to combine several short holidays into fewer longer holidays, except in the exceptional circumstances described above. This opposition to the principle of combining was expressed across the sample. Participants (including currently constrained and long term restricted) who felt unable to take as many holidays as they would

like due to financial constraints admitted that in fact they would take more, rather than fewer, holidays if they were able.

5.30 There were participants who felt that other people's excessive travelling should be curbed.

"It depends how many you take to start with. I'd get on a plane once a year, twice a year, which I don't think is too much. But I think if there were people that do get on planes loads and loads and loads and loads then perhaps that is a thing that could be tackled." (Woman, 30-60, currently constrained, Brighton)

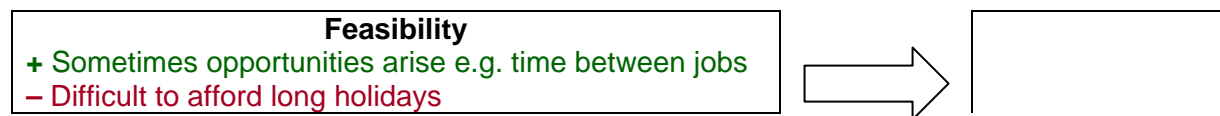
5.31 However, no one thought that they fell into this category. A young woman who took several short holidays a year, including two skiing trips in France and a longer beach holiday overseas, acknowledged that this was a lot but still felt it could be justified:

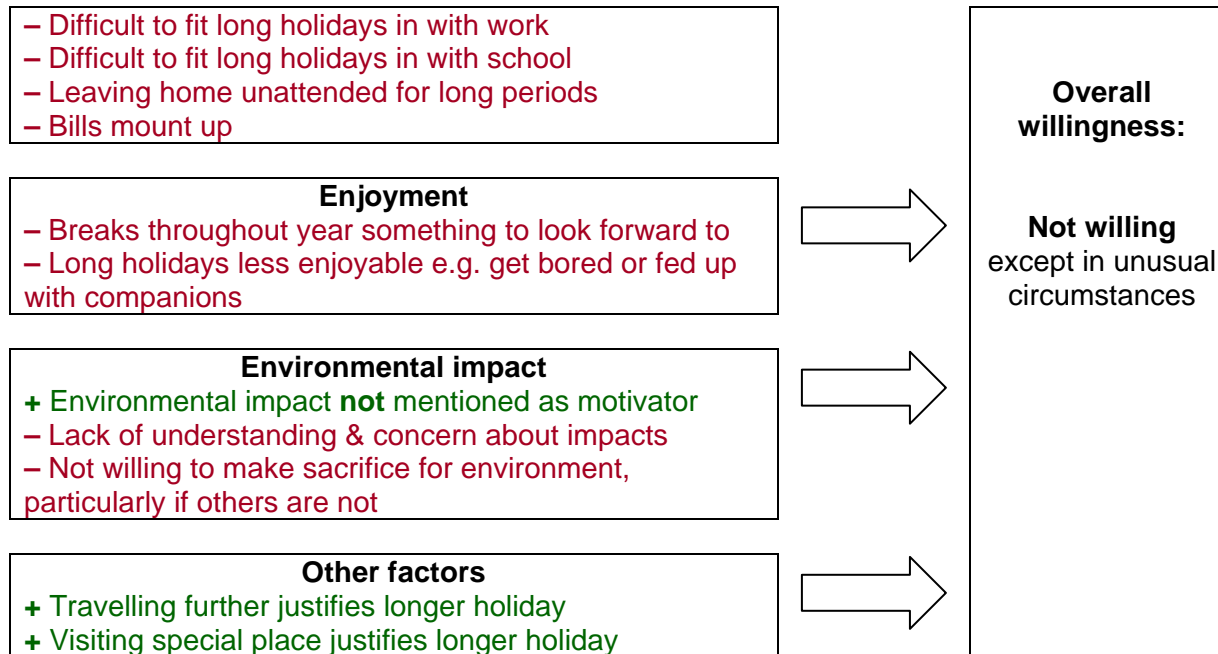
"I don't want to say this out loud but we have about 8 to 12 holidays a year. Some of them I wouldn't really call holidays. They're short holidays round Europe - short term fixes to get you through to your longer holiday. Even if it's just three days camping in Hertford, it's just a break away." (Woman, under 30, wastage focused, Watford)

Encouraging travelling less often/combining travel

5.32 There were correspondingly few suggestions for making this behaviour goal more tempting or more feasible. However, it was suggested that if prices were kept down during the summer then families could afford to take one longer holiday. A participant who had family members that travelled a great deal for business thought perhaps paying more would encourage them to cut down, although she pointed out that this would be hard on them.

Figure 5.2 Factors affecting willingness to travel less often/combine travel





Choosing more sustainable travel methods

5.33 This section of the report looks at two of Defra’s tourism behaviour goals: reducing non-essential flying and using cars less. We discuss views about long and short haul flights together because this was how they were discussed in the focus groups. However, Defra’s interest is in encouraging people to switch travel methods for short haul flights.

Motivations and barriers to travelling by plane

5.34 Participants gave two overriding reasons for choosing to fly for their holidays. Firstly, they pointed out that flying tended to be the **least expensive option**. Secondly, they found flying **quick and convenient** (“*fell asleep, woke up, I was there*”). Time was a particular issue for short breaks and for certain participants. Long journeys were difficult with young children.

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5.35 However, participants pointed out that flying was not always the quickest way of getting to their destination and they worried that the inconvenience of flying would get worse with airport expansion (*“they’re going to open a new terminal in a year’s time – it will take you 10 hours to get in there”*). Even a woman driving to the Alps to go skiing found that this took the same number of hours as flying because of the time needed to get to the airport and get skiing kit loaded on the plane.

5.36 For some participants, flying was a **pleasure** and a valued part of the holiday experience (*“an extra bit of a holiday, a bit special”*). However, for other participants, flights were something to be endured or feared. Participants spoke of bad experiences with flights. Surprisingly, these experiences seemed not to have deterred them from flying. They simply found ways to get over their fear or they opted only to take short flights. This shows the depth of the challenge to persuade people to change their holiday behaviour for environmental reasons. If people are willing to endure fear then something intangible like sustainability is unlikely to compete.

“I had a very bad experience going back many years ago and it has really put me off flying. [Thailand] is a long way, you are talking 10 hours. I wouldn’t obviously want to go there. Greece is about 4 hours, isn’t it? If I have a good stiff drink before I get on, it calms me down. You have to do these things if you want to see the world. You have to jump on a plane.”

(Woman, 30 to 60, consumer with conscience, Watford)

5.37 Besides overcoming the practical obstacles and despite the recency of the boom in air travel, flying was the **default choice** for overseas holidays (*“a mindset now”*). Participants also explained that it was something they were delighted to finally be able to afford, after a childhood of yearning for overseas travel. Moving to another form of transport that would make overseas travel harder again would be seen as a backwards step. Getting over this barrier would be a challenge.

“I find [it] a bit annoying [that] in my childhood and growing up I couldn’t afford to go abroad. In fact hardly anyone in my school did. If they did it was ‘oh, they’ve been to Spain’. No-one went abroad, only if you had the money. It was a very elite thing. But now finally you can hop on a plane. And I’m thinking ‘oh I can see the world’. Then suddenly it’s ‘hold on, what

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about the environment?” (Woman, 30 to 60, green activist, Brighton)

Motivations and barriers to travelling by car

5.38 Two main reasons were given in favour of taking a car on holiday. Firstly, it was **easier to take luggage** in a car than on a train. Secondly, having the car was **useful for getting around at the holiday destination**. This was useful for holidays involving sightseeing or *“touring around”* but was not necessary for holidays like Centre Parcs where people would stay in one place.

5.39 On the other hand, travelling to a holiday destination by car could be **boring or frustrating** and other modes of transport could be more relaxing (*“I argued with my boyfriend the whole way - I can’t read a map and he can’t while he’s driving”*). Having a car at the destination was not always advantageous either. For instance, a man in Manchester preferred to take the train rather than drive to the Lake District because there was too much traffic there. Nor was it necessary, particularly if public transport was good at the holiday destination.

“I’ve always survived by using public transport. Whenever I’ve gone anywhere it’s always been a combination of trains, buses and taxis and walking whenever I can.” (Man, 30 to 60, wastage focused, Brighton)

Motivations and barriers to travelling by train

5.40 Trains had a number of points in their favour. Firstly, it was recognised that they had a **low environmental impact**.

5.41 Secondly, train travel was **comfortable**. A young man commented favourably on the amount of space in trains compared to planes and the freedom to walk around, stand by the window, and eat when he wanted. Modern trains were also seen to share many of the valued qualities of planes:

“It was so quiet and zooming along and spacious....It is like you are sealed in a bubble and you just glide along... It is very

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plane.” (Woman, 30 to 60, green activist, Watford)

5.42 Thirdly, participants said that travelling by train could be **enjoyable**. Some teenagers viewed train travel as an adventure and even the waits at stations could be an opportunity to explore new places. Others enjoyed the feel of trains (“*a lot more noise, a lot more atmosphere*”) and the opportunity to people watch or to read. For instance, a man who caught a series of trains and buses from Brighton to his holiday destination in Suffolk explained:

“We just accept that it’s going to take a long time and we just enjoy the journey. It’s almost a day at the front of the holiday and a day on the way home so it almost becomes part of the holiday. Sometimes we stop for a meal in London or something like that and just make a day of it.” (Man, 30 to 60, wastage focused, Brighton)

5.43 However, views differed on this point. A woman with a young child disliked having to travel with child-related paraphernalia and found that the novelty of train travel soon wore off for her daughter.

5.44 As with leisure, the main obstacle to travelling by train was the **high cost**. This was a recurrent complaint. As a result of the high cost of train fares, participants sometimes felt forced to take other modes of transport. For instance, a woman who drove to Cornwall although she would have preferred to catch the train explained “*the fares were extortionate*”.

5.45 While this was the dominant view, there were participants who commented favourably on low cost advance fares and railcards. They argued that booking in advance was not a problem for holidays because people would know their travel dates in advance. However, others did find it a bother as explained in chapter 6.

5.46 A second important barrier to using trains was **time and convenience**. Long journeys from one part of the country to another or from UK to countries overseas necessitated changes. Different train companies that did not coordinate their timetables added to the difficulty. Train problems also made journey times unpredictable.

5.47 There were participants who disagreed and pointed out that train journeys could actually be quicker and less troublesome

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than plane journeys under some circumstances. For instance, participants pointed to the speed and ease of travelling by Eurostar.

- 5.48 Although not widespread, some participants avoided train travel because they were **nervous** about trains in general (for instance because of the speed) or Eurostar in particular (*“claustrophobic”, “you think of the water around you”, “in case it burst”*).

Motivations and barriers to travelling by coach

- 5.49 Participants' main complaints about coaches were that they were **uncomfortable** (*“a small vehicle with a lot of people crammed on and one really smelly toilet”, “you don't know who's going to sit next to you – a big sweaty man who snored all the way”*) and slow. A young man described a recent trip to Newquay on the coach. He objected to the discomfort and said he had not been able to sleep for a whole night so next time he would travel by train instead.
- 5.50 Coaches also suffered from a **negative perception**, being associated with, for instance, school travel or older people. Views about coach travel were also coloured by bad experiences, both personal and recounted by others. Some of these went back to participants' childhoods (*“eight years old stuck on a coach for two days”*) while others were very recent. These experiences had put some participants off for good, unlike bad experiences with planes.
- 5.51 However, there was a little enthusiasm for coach travel (*“you see a lot more at ground level”*). An older woman, who had been persuaded to take a coach to Italy by low fares described how the experience had been a pleasant surprise. It had challenged her preconceptions about coach travel (*“lots of people think you only get old people on a coach but we had lots of medical students”*) and had meant she could stop at places she would not have seen on a plane.

Differences across the sample

- 5.52 Besides the occasional participant who praised railcards and advance fares, high cost train fares and low cost air fares were

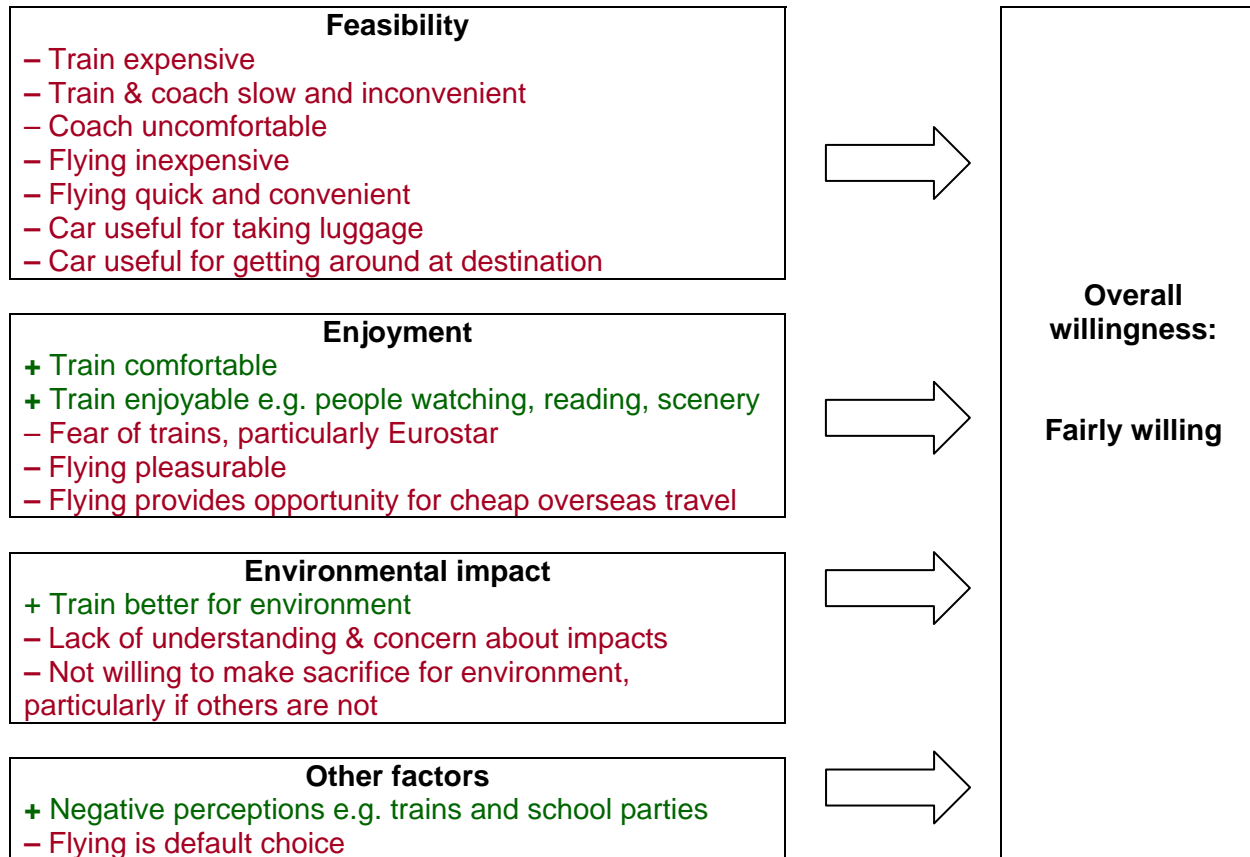
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a barrier to more sustainable travel across the sample, irrespective of environmental segment or income. There was a suggestion that currently constrained participants might consider train travel when earning more.

5.53 The emphasis placed on ease and convenience differed across the sample.

- **Personal circumstances** Participants with children tended to find it easier to travel by car than train. This was partly because it was easier to take the necessary luggage. A woman with six children also worried about losing them on the train and preferred the control that a car offered (*“have them all strapped in – you know where you are”*). Participants under 21 seemed more flexible about their mode of transport. This may have been because cost, speed and convenience were not as much of a concern for them. Nevertheless, flying was seen as the default mode of transport by some people in this age group. An 18 year old explained that this was because he had grown up with it.
- **Location** Participants in Bournemouth with a small airport very nearby sang its praises (*“you stroll in and stroll out”*) and said that the convenience it offered them encouraged them to fly often. In contrast, participants living outside the south east were deterred from using Eurostar or travelling by train from one part of the country to the other because of the need to go via London or to change trains.

“You are non-stop from London, it is a shorter journey. But if you are going from Manchester to Cornwall, it is an awful long way. You have got to change, unload the cases. You get no help off people these days.” (Man, 30-60, consumer with conscience, Manchester)
- **Environmental segment** This was not clearly associated with travel method preferences. However, participants who focused on the positive aspects of train and coach travel, such as comfort and enjoyment, tended to have environmental concerns (consumer with conscience, green activist, currently constrained). On the other hand, many participants in these environmental segments did not note the benefits of public transport for holidays.

Figure 5.3 Factors affecting willingness to choose more sustainable travel methods



Encouraging more sustainable travel methods

5.54 Participants mentioned a number of initiatives that government or industry could take to encourage less plane and car travel (discussed further in chapter 6):

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- Politicians and public figures set an example
- Provide information about the environmental impacts of different travel methods
- Reduce the cost of public transport
- Offer discounts on holidays for people travelling by public transport
- Increase the cost of air fares e.g. through tax
- Improve public transport
- Introduce personal carbon allowance
- Reduce number of flights or stop airport expansion

Choosing more sustainable activities

5.55 This relates to three of Defra's behaviour goals: increase outdoor activities, avoid commodities with significant impact on biodiversity, and contribute to local economy.

Motivations and barriers to outdoor activities

5.56 For some participants outdoor activity was an important element of their holidays. Other participants **did not enjoy physical exertion** in general (*"I don't do trekking... I'm not one for exercise"*) or felt that holidays should be about rest, not exertion. Interestingly, the younger participants who expressed this view were comfortable with the exertion involved in clubbing or shopping.

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- 5.57 Among the participants who enjoyed outdoor activities, there seemed to be three different motivations.
- 5.58 Firstly, some participants simply **wanted to be outdoors** to make a change from their everyday lives that were spent indoors. For example, a young woman with an office job explained that this was why she liked to go skiing and camping when on holiday (*“working anything from 8 to 12 hours a day [so] I take great pleasure in not being stuck indoors”*).
- 5.59 Secondly, some participants were **interested in nature**. For instance, a man with three children described their most recent summer holiday in the UK that involved staying with a friend who had a badger set at the bottom of his garden, spotting dolphins, and going fossil hunting.
- 5.60 Finally, some participants were attracted by the **sense of adventure**. The younger participants who enjoyed outdoor activities tended to be drawn towards the more adventurous activities such as skiing. More sedate outdoor activities like going for a walk in the countryside were seen as activities that would be done with their family, under duress. When asked what he liked about the idea of trekking in Nepal, a teenager replied: *“We’d just get lost or something – it could turn into quite a mad adventure.”*

Motivations and barriers to activities that contribute to local economy

- 5.61 As discussed above, some participants seek out holidays that involve contact with local cultures while others prefer to be apart from them in a *“home from home”* cultural bubble. There were some extreme examples of isolation. For instance, a man who had visited Disney World described how the set up discouraged visitors from going outside and spending money in the local area (*“When you’re in the Disney park, you pay Disney prices – they have got the monopoly, definitely.”*)
- 5.62 In contrast, a woman talked about how she and a group of friends made a point of eating out at local restaurants rather than international hotels to make sure the local people benefited directly.
- 5.63 Participants spoke of going shopping on holiday. This was not discussed in detail so it was not clear whether participants

- spent their money in multinationals or shops owned by local people. However, mention was made of visits to markets in North Africa.

Motivations and barriers to activities with an impact on biodiversity

5.64 On the whole, participants were not aware of the impacts of their holidays on biodiversity (see chapter 3) so could not make a decision to avoid them.

Encouraging more sustainable activities

5.65 There was little discussion about whether participants would be prepared to give up or reduce their engagement with less sustainable activities. However, like leisure, there was evidence that they were willing to continue their current activities but with more consideration for the environment. For example a young woman described how her boyfriend went rock climbing where there were already pins rather than creating new routes that would damage rock, and a keen golfer explained that he only played on old golf courses as he objected to new golf courses being built and damaging the environment.

5.66 *“I’m not interested in all these new golf courses that are getting built. I like the old ones. They’ve been there for donkeys years. They’re not doing any damage to the environment. Why should they go and destroy the countryside just to make an 18 hole golf course? There’s plenty of golf courses over the world. Why start building new ones?”* (Man, 30 to 60, green activist, Brighton)

6 Requests for industry and government

Summary

Participants generally saw a greater role for government than industry in reducing the environmental impact of leisure and tourism, although they also came up with a wide range of suggestions for industry. There were several reasons including the following.

- Participants did not understand the dividing line between government and industry responsibility.
- They thought that industry would resist taking expensive action due to vested interests.
- They assumed that 'greening' had already taken place which perhaps implies space for choice editing.

However, there was a dichotomy between calls for government to take action and concern about interference.

Participants wanted to know that their pro-environmental choices were part of a wider movement. They requested that public figures, mainly politicians, should lead the way and cut down on their flying in other words that government should exemplify.

There were repeated calls for more information and numerous suggestions about what it should be like.

- Some participants asked to be told how their actions would help while others preferred to be told what would happen if they did not take action. However, the latter "*shock tactics*" approach could backfire.

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- There were several suggestions about where information could be presented, including some innovative ones such as targeting it through stickers on petrol pumps.

- Participants stressed that information should be presented in a way that was meaningful. They strongly preferred environmental impacts presented in terms of an everyday action ('light bulb hours') to more scientific language (tonnes of CO₂).

However, participants emphasised that policies/initiatives other than information provision sent out strong messages.

There was universal support for making train travel more affordable, ideally through simple user-friendly approaches. There was a mixed response to raising the cost of flying through taxes. Participants generally saw it could have an effect but objected to it mainly on the basis of fairness.

Participants requested improved facilities. They focused on public transport and leisure facilities. Some requests were basic, such as making buses safer, while others were unrealistically high, such as diverting coaches via villages.

Introduction

6.1 This chapter looks at who participants think should take responsibility for reducing the environmental impacts of leisure and tourism and what they think should be done. It looks in turn at each of the approaches mentioned by participants in the focus groups:

- Demonstrating that other people are taking action
- Providing information

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- Using financial incentives and disincentives
- Improving services and facilities
- Limiting travel
- Developing and adopting new technology
- Other miscellaneous suggestions

6.2 Participants were asked what they thought could be done to encourage movement in the direction of Defra's behaviour goals. They were also asked who should take responsibility for environmental issues associated with leisure and tourism and how.

Government, industry or consumers?

6.3 Participants had mixed views about whether they should take responsibility for helping to solve environmental problems. As discussed in chapter 3, some did see a role for themselves and other consumers but there were numerous barriers to turning this sense of responsibility into action. Besides the barriers listed in chapter 3, participants felt that some large-scale issues were beyond the reach of individuals. For instance, a woman said she would like to take public transport more but fares would need to be reduced first (*"where pricing is concerned, that has to be council and Government-led"*).

6.4 Participants generally saw a greater role for government than industry in reducing the impact of leisure and tourism on the environment. This was particularly the case for leisure. For tourism the focus was on central government, while for leisure there was unsurprisingly more recognition of the role of local government.

6.5 There were a number of reasons why participants emphasised the role of government.

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- Participants seemed to be **used to government taking the lead** on environmental issues such as recycling.
- Several of **the measures that participants had heard of**, for instance road pricing and taxes on air fares, would require legislation.
- Participants felt that **legislation would be necessary** to bring about behaviour change, drawing parallels with, for instance, wearing seatbelts and other driver behaviour.
- It was argued that the British government or governments around the world were **responsible for causing problems** in the first place or at least allowing them to happen. For instance, they had ignored scientific and popular opinion and had delayed banning CFCs unnecessarily. Therefore government should shoulder the responsibility for solving the problems rather than passing it on to consumers (*“oh dear, now we’ve caused it, right you lot can’t go on holiday”*).

6.6 There were three main reasons why some participants saw a reduced role for industry, none of which lets industry off the hook.

- Participants were **not clear about the dividing line** between government and industry responsibility. For instance, government was sometimes seen as responsible for public transport.
- Some participants believed that **industry would be resistant** to taking actions that would be expensive or would put people off using their products or services. For instance, it was suggested that industry might not want to give information about the environmental impact of holidays.
- In contrast to the previous argument, other participants believed that **industry must already be doing all they could**. For example, it was suggested that Disneyland probably had consultants looking into wind power (*“all these big places do anyway, they have environmental officers and research teams”*); and the leisure industry would not be

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using any more electricity than needed because they would not want to waste money (*“their bills must be horrendous and competition is so tight - they wouldn’t spend X amount of pounds on electricity that they didn’t have to spend”*).

6.7 However, with a little prompting, participants came up with a wide range of suggestions for various players in the leisure and tourism industries. For instance:

- **Airlines:** increase fares, develop and adopt new technology e.g. biofuels, make sure planes are full, refuel as efficiently as possible
- **Bus and train companies:** cut fares, improve services, fill vehicles
- **Tour operators and hotels:** provide information on different travel methods, develop facilities for younger people in the UK, invest responsibly abroad
- **Theme parks:** provide separate bins to facilitate recycling
- **Restaurants:** stop using disposable plates and cutlery

6.8 There was limited recognition that government could influence industry, as well as influencing consumers. For instance, government could require tour operators to give information on the environmental impacts of holidays or could require airlines to invest in new technologies. However, there was concern that government would not hold firm in the face of industry opposition.

6.9 While there was widespread agreement that government should take action, there were dissenting voices who worried that they were already interfering too much in people’s lives (*“they’re trying to make it a nanny state - they are dictating everything to us at the moment”*).

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Demonstrating that others are taking action

- 6.10 Demonstrating that other people are taking action was crucially important. Some participants felt that it was simply not worth taking action unless other people or other countries were doing the same (chapter 3). Although this was an issue across the sample, almost all calls to demonstrate that others are taking action were made by participants with an interest in the environment, particularly consumers with conscience and wastage focused.
- 6.11 There was considerable annoyance that **politicians** were not leading by example. Participants asked that politicians take fewer flights for holidays and meetings (*“[Blair’s] busy buzzing round using all the fuel up”*), car share, and cycle if they expect the public to do so. Participants were also disgruntled by the behaviour of other high profile public figures such as Prince Charles taking a flight to collect an environmental award and film stars with private jets.
- 6.12 Participants wanted to be assured that other **people like themselves** were taking action (*“if everyone was singing from the same songsheet I think I’d be singing with them”*). However, they made no suggestions specifically aimed at demonstrating what other consumers are doing.
- 6.13 Participants were seriously disheartened by feeling that the UK was acting alone. While some participants seemed to feel that pollution produced by **other countries** was a problem that could not be solved, other participants suggested that other countries should be persuaded to buy in to reducing their pollution (*“there’s got to be a worldwide agreement”*).

Providing information

- 6.14 There were repeated calls for more information. However, there were mixed views about whether providing information will actually bring about behaviour change. Some participants recalled public education campaigns that had made a difference while others mentioned campaigns that had failed. Similarly, some said that the information given in the focus group would make a difference to them while others said it would not because other factors would continue to outweigh environmental

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impacts.

- 6.15 Policies and initiatives may send more powerful messages than communication campaigns. Low cost train fares were seen as an indication that trains were environmentally friendly (*“there must be a reason why they’re trying to put more people on trains”*) and tax on flights sent the opposite message. On the other hand the expansion of airports was interpreted as showing that the impacts of aeroplanes had been overstated (*“If they’re that serious about it, why are they building a new terminal at Heathrow?”*). This highlights the need for consistency between communication strategies and other government or industry policies and initiatives.
- 6.16 It was argued that information should be given even if information does not have a dramatic and widespread effect on behaviour. People would then be in a position to make informed decisions. It could also sway people who were not certain and at the very least it would make people consider the issue anew. Even just the fact that information is provided could have an impact. For instance, a young man explained that if it was a serious issue, he would expect a lot more coverage, along the line of warnings on cigarette packets.
- 6.17 Participants requested two broad types of information.
 - Participants wanted to know **what they could do** to reduce their environmental impact. They asked for tips along the lines of the recent campaign encouraging motorists to empty their car boots (*“simple little things that any one of us could go and do tomorrow or tonight”*). They wanted pointers to facilities, services or travel methods they might not know about. This desire to receive more information does hint at recognition of personal responsibility.
 - Participants wanted to be told **why they should take action**. It was not clear how best to present this information. Some participants asked for a positive message showing how their action would help improve the situation but others preferred a negative message telling them what would happen if they did not take action. For instance, a woman asked for a warning like cigarettes have on their packets. Some went so far as to suggest that *“shock tactics”* would

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be needed. A young man drew a parallel with an advert showing clogged up arteries that had stopped him smoking. However, there is a danger that shock tactics could backfire, making people feel it is too late for action and encouraging profligacy (see chapter 3).

6.18 Participants stressed that information should be presented in a way that is easy to understand. They asked for information to be brief (*“short and sweet”*), simple (*“not graphs, tables and number crunching”*) and in everyday language (*“jargon free”*). Light bulb equivalents for leisure and tourism journeys were well received as people were very familiar with the concept of turning off lights to save energy⁷. Tonnes of CO₂ were just as firmly rejected as participants did not understand its role or the mechanism of global warming (see chapter 3).

“Tonnes of carbon dioxide – it’s like what’s that? But when you put it being the equivalent of, that makes sense to everybody. Everyone knows that leaving their light bulb on for 18 weeks is a long time.” (Woman, under 30, currently constrained, Brighton, leisure focus group)

6.19 The information in the focus groups was not always taken at face value. In particular, participants questioned why the impact of driving was presented per car while the impact of taking a train or plane was presented per person, or else they did not notice this difference and misunderstood the information⁸. They also asked what type of car; why 100W rather than 40w or 60w bulbs; why particular destinations had been chosen; and why the figures did not quite add up.

6.20 It was not clear how frequently or forcefully information should be presented. There is a careful line to tread. On the one

⁷ The information on light bulb equivalents was drawn from a number of sources:

- Information on CO₂ emissions from flying were taken from www.climatecare.co.uk
- Information on CO₂ emissions from driving and train journeys were taken from Defra (2005) Guidelines for company reporting on greenhouse gas emissions
- Information on CO₂ emissions from Eurostar were taken from Eurostar’s website www.eurostar.com

The conversion factor for light bulb hours was provided by the Energy Saving Trust (a 100W lightbulb on for 1 hour uses 0.1kWh, associated with 0.043 kg CO₂).

⁸ This is the way in which the figures are presented in Defra (2005) Guidelines for company reporting on greenhouse gas emissions and on the www.climatecare.co.uk.

hand, participants felt that it would need to be presented often and *“in your face”* if they were to take any notice. On the other hand, if it was pushed too hard it could prove counterproductive, putting people off taking action. A participant talked about advertising on recycling:

“I think you can put up too many signs, pushing people away. They start ignoring them. You are being pushed and pushed and in the end you think ‘oh sod it’ and you don’t recycle then, you just chuck everything in one bin.” (Man, over 60, basic contributor, Chipping Sodbury, leisure focus group)

- 6.21 There may also be a risk of message fatigue although this was not mentioned explicitly. For instance, a young person said that he ignored the warning on the cigarette packets because he knew it but would take notice of information about the impacts of tourism on the environment because it is new to him. There may therefore be an opportunity to get the message across before people become blasé about the issues.
- 6.22 There were numerous suggestions about where the information could be presented. Television was seen as a powerful medium and had been a source of environmental information through the news (*“I’d heard on the news that flying, the emissions, are one of the worst things ever”*), documentaries, or even contests such as Dragons Den. Participants suggested using newspapers or posters on billboards or on the side of buses. More targeted information could be given through stickers on petrol pumps (*“while you’re filling your car you can read it”*), in travel brochures, on airline tickets, or over the phone when booking holidays. A young participant suggested something more interactive, along the lines of the focus group, and other participants said they would behave differently as a result of taking part in the discussion.
- 6.23 Participants suggested directing information at children. They explained that children learnt fast, taught their parents, and would need to take responsibility because *“it’s their future, not ours any more.”* However, younger participants admitted absorbing little of the environmental education given at school. They were no more, or less, open to learning about it now than older participants.

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6.24 When asked who should provide information, there were a number of suggestions

- The main suggestion was **government**. However, there was a feeling among some participants that information from them could not be relied upon as it might be a way of winning votes or raising funds (*“we tend to hear more about it before elections than any other times”*). The Environment Agency received a passing mention.
- The **leisure or tourism industries** could provide information. There was some concern that they would not want to give information that would not show them in a good light but it was pointed out that government could require them to do so, like the health warnings on cigarette packets. There was just a little distrust (*“they have got special new trains that are cleaner than the old type – whether there is any truth in it”*).
- A **celebrity** could put the case although this suggestion received a mixed response (*“Robbie Williams or someone – that would get my attention”*).
- There was the occasional request for information to be provided by **“people like us – someone at our level”**. It was clear that information from family and friends as well as other focus group participants could be very influential. For instance, participants mentioned that they had chosen holiday destinations on the basis of friends’ recommendations or that pro-environmental behaviours had been heavily influenced by partners.
- Similarly, it was suggested that settings like the focus group were conducive. Within the focus groups views on, for instance, coach travel were changed by hearing positive experiences.

“It’s better if you talk about it rather than tell it, like this. If you ask for an opinion on it, explain, but keep it quite neutral, then I think it tends to be more interesting.” (Man, 16-21, currently constrained, Brighton, tourism focus group)

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Using financial measures

- 6.25 As discussed in chapters 4 and 5, cost played a very important role in participants' leisure and tourism decisions. In particular, it acted as a barrier to choosing more sustainable travel methods and to a lesser extent to taking holidays in the UK.
- 6.26 There were repeated requests to bring down the price of public transport, particularly trains, and even suggestions that it should be free. There was annoyance that in fact some of the train companies were putting prices up to deal with overcrowding on trains, instead of bringing them down.
- 6.27 There was evidence that price cuts could make a difference. Participants pointed to the success of free bus passes for older people in Brighton⁹. However, price cuts would not make a difference to everyone with other considerations, particularly convenience, still more important. This emphasises the importance of adopting multiple approaches.
- 6.28 Responses to existing initiatives were mixed:
- Discounts on holidays and leisure for people who travelled by train were very rarely mentioned.
 - Discounts for older people and families holding railcards were valued by those who used them but did not appear to be well known. This is important because travelling with a family was seen as prohibitively expensive.
 - The current system of low cost advance purchase tickets was well known but had a mixed reception. While some found it useful, on the whole it was seen as restrictive and complicated, as the quote below illustrates. There was a marked contrast between attitudes to booking plane and train tickets, with participants reporting, for instance, that they planned their holidays around the availability of bargain flights.

⁹ This finding mirrors public response to the improvements to buses over recent years by Transport for London.

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“We’re going to Aberdeen in the summer. They only release a certain number of tickets six weeks before the date you want to travel. So we’re going to have to make sure that we’ve remembered that date, and we’re going to have to get on the internet because you can’t do it by phone, and you have to make sure that you’re in probably within the first hour of that slot opening. Otherwise it will cost us £300.” (Woman, under 30, wastage focused, Watford, tourism focus group)

6.29 Participants seemed to favour a simple approach. Reducing fares across the board was widely suggested while more sophisticated approaches were not.

“You have got to travel at certain times, on certain days with certain companies. If you could make it simpler...” (Man, 30 to 60, consumer with conscience, Manchester, tourism focus group)

6.30 Some participants saw the introduction of tax on air fares as a fait accompli. This was generally seen as an effective way, and some said the only way, to reduce flying. However, it would need to be quite high to reduce the amount that people flew. A young participant, who admitted that his view was coloured by not having to pay, suggested:

“I think it should be more than £20 personally. If I was paying £500 for a holiday and they said £20 compared to that, I really wouldn’t mind. If it’s like £200 then I’d consider it.” (Man, under 30, currently constrained, Brighton, tourism focus group)

6.31 Doubts about its effectiveness were mentioned but they were not widespread. For instance it was suggested that people would just fly from elsewhere or that holidays are so important to people that they would just put their flight *“on plastic”* however much it cost. Participants seemed to be more concerned about the fairness of tax on air fares. They pointed out that people on low incomes who fly less anyway would be most affected when it is people who fly often who really need to be targeted. There was also a little distrust of this approach as it was seen as a way for government to raise money, rather than to help the environment.

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- 6.32 Participants therefore suggested that sophisticated approaches would be fairer. For instance, people who fly a little could be rewarded with low cost flights or vouchers. It was also suggested that people who travelled a lot, including business people, should have to pay more.
- 6.33 Some of the focus groups touched on offsetting. The concept was not widely known or understood. Given the poor understanding of carbon emissions (see chapter 3), it is not surprising that participants did not easily grasp the concept of offsetting. However, a basic understanding may be sufficient.
- 6.34 When the concept was discussed, the response to offsetting was mixed. There was some concern that the money would not be used as intended or that trees would be cut down. Among those who accepted that it would operate properly, there were still differing views:

“You pay the money and you can forget it, you’ve done your bit. I think it’s the only way that they’re going to push it.” (Man, over 60, wastage focused, Bournemouth, tourism focus group)

“I think it’s better than doing nothing.” (Woman, under 30, currently constrained, Bournemouth, tourism focus group)
- 6.35 There was a little discussion about reducing reliance on cars through road pricing (*“charging by the mile”*). Views centred on its fairness and ranged from positive to negative as illustrated by the following quotes at either end of the spectrum:

“Totally unfair because you pay your tax and your petrol.” (Woman, over 60, wastage focused, Leeds, leisure focus group)

“Fairer. Scrap car tax altogether and just pay for how much you use the roads. People who drive less will pay less.”
(Woman, under 30, currently constrained, Chipping Sodbury)
- 6.36 Although most of the suggestions for use of incentives related to travel method, proposals relating to the other behaviour goals were made. To encourage UK holidays, they should be made less expensive; and to encourage people to take fewer

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longer holidays, prices during school holidays should be kept down. There was a mixed response to discounts for locals intended to incentivise them to use nearby leisure facilities. They could be more trouble than they are worth (*“bring down your passport, your this, your that and the other and we’ll give you 10p off”*).

6.37 There were participants who seemed to be bargain hunters and responded well to discounts of various sorts. For instance a man in Bournemouth commented favourably on 2-for-1 entrance to tourist attractions when travelling by train and on low cost train fares when using a family railcard; a young man in Brighton sang the praises of advance purchase tickets and had made use of reduced price entry to Brighton Pavilion for local residents.

Improving facilities and services

6.38 Participants believed that improving public transport would encourage more people to use it. They suggested a number of improvements. Public transport should be:

- **More convenient**, with services extending to places not reached at the moment and more direct, less convoluted routes.
- **Clean**. It should meet basic standards and have toilets.
- **Safe**, with cameras and a better accident record.
- **More pleasant**. This meant different things to different participants. For instance, an older man asked for trains to be quieter while some women with children asked for trains and buses to be made more fun. They suggested giving children crayons and videos (*“make en route interesting”*), in other words for the journey to be made part of the holiday experience.

6.39 Participants had several suggestions for improving leisure facilities. One suggestion was to combine several leisure facilities

- in a single location to reduce the amount of leisure travel needed. It was recognised that creating such facilities had the potential to reduce the amount of travel to a series of destinations but not that they could create congestion as traffic would be condensed into a smaller area.

6.40 A more mainstream suggestion was to provide more local facilities or improve those that exist. Improvements could lead to a virtuous cycle: if more people used parks, councils would spend more money to look after them so parks would become more appealing, and they would then be used even more.

6.41 While participants requested more local facilities, they felt that the situation was in fact moving in the opposite direction. In Chipping Sodbury, they complained about how much further they had to travel than in the past to reach countryside as a result of new housing development. In Leeds they pointed out that housing was being built without new leisure facilities necessitating long journeys for days out, illustrating the importance of integrating leisure into new developments.

6.42 Participants had suggestions for facilities that would encourage them to take holidays in the UK. While families were catered for, young people did not feel that they were. A young man in his late 20s requests something to fill the gap, although there was a mixed response to his suggestion:

“You have got the Butlins and Haven for the families. If there was something like that aimed at my age group...” (Man, under 30, basic contributor, Manchester, tourism focus group)

6.43 Participants recognised that not all their suggestions were realistic. For instance, it was pointed out that a coach company would be unlikely to divert their service from Bristol to Yorkshire via a small village of Yate. This illustrates the exacting demands that consumers make. Some hurdles to behaviour change may be impossibly high.

6.44 Participants pointed out that improvements alone would not necessarily bring about behaviour change. They might need to be coupled with price cuts. Again, this emphasises the point made in 6.28 about the need for multi-pronged approaches to

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behaviour change.

- 6.45 Sometimes services were adequate but participants were reluctant to use them due to their negative perceptions. When they were persuaded to try them, by for instance free bus passes or low coach fares, they were surprised by what they found.

Limiting travel

- 6.46 Participants discussed the idea of a carbon allowance although they did not use this term. It was discussed less widely than a carbon tax, suggesting that the idea was less well known, but also received a mixed response. Like a carbon tax, some assumed that it was going to be introduced imminently.
- 6.47 Participants who supported it thought it was fair because it applied equally to everyone (*“a law where everyone cuts down”*). It was seen as a short term sacrifice for the common good in difficult times, like rationing in war time or limits on the amount of money taken out of the country.
- 6.48 Participants who opposed it saw it as an infringement of people’s rights (*“that’s stopping people’s freedom”*) or thought it unfair because well-off people would simply buy a larger allowance. There was also concern that it would penalise people who had to travel to visit family abroad or for business.
- 6.49 Participants suggested cutting back the total number of flights or halting airport expansions. They felt that this approach would be a straightforward and effective way of limiting flying (*“more runways – don’t build them, we’ll have to make do then”*) while also avoiding other problems associated with airport expansion. However, it could push up the price of flights.

Developing and adopting new technology

- 6.50 Participants discussed whether technological advances could make holiday and leisure travel less damaging for the

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environment. This issue was mainly discussed by men.

- 6.51 Some participants put little faith in new technology. They doubted that it could contribute much to solving the problem, feeling that it would take too long, or arguing that it would be risky to rely on it (*“I think they’re just hoping that that will happen but they haven’t got any guarantee”*).
- 6.52 However, the dominant view was that new technology could potentially help a great deal. Some participants said that less damaging technologies were already being used or were under development. They gave specific examples, such as Virgin trains being cleaner and planes being converted to bio fuels.
- 6.53 There was concern that technological advances were being held back by lack of investment and vested interests. Participants generally felt that it was the airlines’ responsibility to invest in developing technology. It was suggested that the government could insist that they do so or could encourage them through taxation:
“I don’t agree with this tax they’re talking about. I think they’re taxing the wrong people. They should be making the airlines pay and that way they will use or develop aircraft that aren’t as polluting. If you tax them directly there’s more incentive for them to remove those sorts of engines that have high emissions.” (Man, under 30, currently constrained, Brighton, tourism focus group)

Other suggestions

- 6.54 There were several suggestions that were not related to Defra’s behaviour goals. Instead they would make participants’ existing choices more sustainable.
- 6.55 Many of the requests made of industry were simple measures for improving efficiency or reducing waste. For instance, participants felt strongly that planes and trains should be full. They would even be prepared to have flights cancelled in order to achieve this. Buses should always carry passengers, rather than being driven back to the depot empty, and should

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have conductors so that they would not have to stand at stops with the engine running while the driver took fares.

- 6.56 Participants suggested that leisure facilities turn off their lights at night. This suggestion built on an initiative that was being run in Bath and Bristol in which participants explained that commercial buildings had been asked to leave on only those lights that were necessary for security (*“they’re challenging everybody to turn their lights off”*). They made several proposals regarding waste reduction: having separate bins for different types of waste to facilitate recycling at places like theme parks; going back to using real plates and cutlery rather than disposal ones; and using recyclable carrier bags.
- 6.57 Some suggestions were for more strategic changes. Participants suggested that tour companies should invest responsibly abroad and that leisure companies should stop developing new golf courses.

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7 Conclusions

Introduction

7.1 This chapter summarises findings and makes recommendations based on them. It presents:

- A brief summary of Defra's behaviour goals for leisure and tourism
- Recommendations for actions to promote the behaviour goals, based on findings from the focus groups
- Suggestions for further research to help with the implementation of the proposed actions
- Overall conclusions

Defra's behaviour goals

7.2 Defra has identified a number of pro-environmental behaviours that it would like to encourage among consumers. There are several behaviour goals related to leisure and several related to tourism.

7.3 The leisure behaviour goals explored in this project were:

- Making use of nearby leisure facilities (Defra's focus is on use of nearby green spaces but we report on leisure facilities in general, including green spaces)
- Travelling less often and combining travel

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- Using cars less
- Choosing more sustainable activities (Two of Defra's behaviour goals are discussed together in this report because they both relate to activity i.e. activities that contribute to the local economy and outdoor activities)

7.4 The tourism behaviour goals explored in this project were:

- Focusing on UK as holiday destination
- Travelling less/combining travel
- Choosing more sustainable travel methods (Two of Defra's behaviour goals are considered together in this report because they both relate to travel method i.e. reducing non-essential flying and using car less.)
- Choosing more sustainable activities (Three of Defra's behaviour goals are considered together because they all relate to activity i.e. increase outdoor activities, avoid commodities with significant impact on biodiversity, and contribute to local economy.)

Recommendations

Focus effort on 'open doors'

7.5 None of Defra's behaviour goals received wholehearted support. However, some of the goals were more acceptable than others. Action: Give most attention to the behaviour goals that were the most acceptable.

7.6 Looking first at the leisure behaviour goals, there was most enthusiasm for taking leisure closer to home and switching to public transport. However, there was little support for choosing different leisure activities for the sake of the environment and no clear view about whether combining several activities into a single trip could be encouraged. Action: Encourage greater

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use of nearby facilities and less use of cars.

7.7 Looking at the tourism behaviour goals, there was considerable openness to taking more UK holidays and some willingness to travel by train instead of plane or car. In contrast, there was strong opposition to the idea of taking fewer longer holidays and little enthusiasm for opting for different leisure activities. Action: Encourage more UK holidays and less use of planes and cars.

Encourage and enable consumers to make choices for environmental reasons

7.8 Leisure and tourism were generally not seen as environmental behaviours and this was one of the reasons why participants did not consider their environmental impacts. Action: Frame leisure and tourism choices as environmental decisions in order to make the environmental impacts more front-of-mind.

7.9 Participants repeatedly requested more information. Action: Provide information to enable consumers to make more informed choices. It should be:

- Quantitative so that they understand the relative impacts of different leisure/tourism choices and the relative impacts of everyday activities compared to leisure and tourism
- Meaningful and tangible in order to work with the level of understanding that consumers have already
- Consistent with other government and industry initiatives such as airport expansion and changes to fare structures

7.10 Understanding the issues is neither necessary nor sufficient for behaviour change. Action: Encourage government and industry action beyond the provision of information.

7.11 Some participants saw no point in changing their leisure or tourism choices unless other people or other countries reduced

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their environmental impacts too. Actions:

- Ensure that consumers feel part of a wider movement towards pro-environmental leisure and tourism among their peers.
- Encourage MPs and other public figures to lead by example.
- Consider whether blowing the UK's trumpet¹⁰ might overcome consumers' concerns about acting unilaterally.
However, this may have the opposite effect and serve to emphasise how little other countries are doing.

7.12 Participants objected to making changes for the sake of the environment, feeling that this was something peculiar that only serious environmentalists would do or that it would simply make their day trip or holiday less enjoyable. Action: Find ways to make sustainable leisure and tourism desirable, rather than a sacrifice, with mainstream, rather than minority, appeal. This could be achieved partly by focusing on promoting motivators and barriers that are **not** related to the environment, as discussed in the rest of this chapter.

Encourage leisure closer to home

7.13 There were two practical barriers to local leisure: lack of facilities of an acceptable standard and, to a lesser extent, lack of knowledge about local facilities. There were also several reasons why going further away added to the enjoyment of a day out. However, these are harder to overcome so we suggest focusing on the practical issues. Actions:

- Provide more leisure facilities and improve existing ones, particularly in areas with new development.
- Inform local residents about the facilities that are available.

¹⁰ UK is well ahead of UNEP and is a recognised leader by UN.

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Encourage UK holidays

- 7.14 The main appeal of domestic holidays was their ease. Action: Focus on this motivator by marketing UK holidays as easy and ideal for short breaks.
- 7.15 Participants generally feel they need to go abroad for to experience other cultures and adventure. Action: consider challenging preconceptions by marketing UK holidays as opportunities for adventure and experiencing other cultures, and as different from 'the bad old days'.
- 7.16 Some participants were deterred from taking domestic holidays because of the cost. Action: Find ways to bring down the cost of UK holidays and to overcome the perception of UK holidays as high cost.

Discourage use of cars and planes for leisure and tourism

- 7.17 Greater use of public transport was contingent on fares coming down. Low advance booking fares were generally not well received. Action: Bring down the cost of train travel, using simple approaches such as railcards rather than complex approaches such as advance booking fares or find ways to make advance booking easier, normative and similar to booking a flight.
- 7.18 Participants were reluctant to take trains and coaches because of the inconvenience and various other factors that made train or coach travel uncomfortable or unpleasant. Action: Take all practical steps to make train and coach travel more convenient and appealing.
- 7.19 Some participants talked about bad experiences on coaches or trains some time ago or based their beliefs on hearsay. Action: Use financial incentives, such as promotions and low cost fares, to encourage consumers to try train and coach travel in order to overcome negative stereotypes or experiences from many years ago.

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- 7.20 Travelling by plane was something that participants took for granted and were willing to endure even if afraid. Therefore simply giving incentives to try something else may not be sufficient to bring about fast or wide scale change. Participants generally believed taxes on air fares would be effective at reducing flying, although they expressed some concerns about fairness. Some suggested limiting flights or halting airport expansions. Action: Give serious consideration to taxing or limiting air travel. Find ways of addressing concerns about fairness.

Suggestions for further research

- 7.21 In order to effectively promote sustainable leisure and tourism, further research with consumers and industry is needed to gain a better understanding of the underlying issues. This should address the details of implementation for the action points and the more fundamental issues holding back sustainable leisure and tourism. Some suggestions for further research are set out below.

Focus effort on 'open doors'

- 7.22 Which consumers are most amenable to change? Carry out further work on segmenting pro-environmental leisure and tourism behaviour.
- 7.23 Which behaviour goals will have the greatest environmental impact? Address this issue by modelling scenarios in selected case study destinations.
- 7.24 Which behaviour goals will be most feasible to introduce, considering factors besides consumer acceptability? Run workshops with industry partners in selected case study destinations to provide key examples.
- 7.25 What would the consequences be of achieving the behaviour goals in terms beyond the environmental impacts and to broader sustainability and social policy issues?

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Encourage and enable consumers to make choices for environmental reasons

- 7.26 What is the best way to provide information? What modes of delivery and types of message (e.g. positive or negative) work best? Do different age groups and environmental segments have different information requirements? How can queries regarding the details of such information be addressed?
- 7.27 Does educating children about sustainable leisure and tourism have an impact on parents?
- 7.28 What could be done to demonstrate that other members of the public are taking action within their leisure and tourism choices?
- 7.29 Why are people strongly attached to leisure and tourism? Are there other cherished behaviours that people are reluctant to change for the sake of the environment? What is can be done to address this attachment?
- 7.30 How can the concept of choice editing be applied to leisure and tourism?
- 7.31 What is the image of people who choose sustainable leisure and tourism? Who identifies with or aspires to this image and who is put off by it?

Encourage UK holidays

- 7.32 What could be done to make UK holidays appeal to young people?
- 7.33 What financial incentives for domestic holidays work best?
- 7.34 Which barriers and motivators for UK holidays are most prevalent and most strongly held?
- 7.35 Is promoting UK holidays more sustainable at the global level when the reduction of both positive and negative impacts of tourism at overseas destinations are considered?

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- 7.36 Who is most susceptible to the message of shifting to UK short breaks? Carry out further work on a segmentation model to allow a focused approach to those most susceptible to the message.
- 7.37 What is the impact of tourism and the yield from tourists? Develop destination level indicators of sustainable tourism to accurately assess these issues.

Discourage use of cars and planes for leisure and tourism

- 7.38 What is the most effective way to bring down the cost of train travel? Do different approaches appeal to different people?
- 7.39 What is the relationship between having a 'day out' and a 'day out in the car'? Is the destination secondary to the mode of transport?
- 7.40 Do sustainable travel plans for visitor attractions encourage modal shift or just different people?
- 7.41 How can train/coach journeys be turned into part of the holiday experience?
- 7.42 How acceptable are the different options for taxing and limiting flights? How acceptable is offsetting?

Other issues

- 7.43 To what extent does combining leisure activities (with chores or other leisure activities) mean that people travel less?
- 7.44 Why are some consumers reluctant to give up their leisure activities? Do leisure activities contribute to their identity? Would giving up leisure activities threaten their identity?
- 7.45 Does reducing visual pollution (e.g. clearing litter on beaches) increase pro-environmental behaviour?

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Conclusions

- 7.46 The many requests that participants made for action indicate that there is scope to encourage sustainable leisure and tourism. There is a role for both government and industry.
- 7.47 However, persuading consumers to consider the environment in this context presents substantial challenges. In particular, limited understanding about the scale of environmental impacts; a belief that there is no point in acting alone; and a strong sense of entitlement and attachment are barriers to more pro-environmental choices.
- 7.48 It may be possible to increase the appeal and feasibility of pro-environmental choices so that they are seen as double wins. However, attachment to flying, driving, overseas holidays and activities such as shopping and theme parks should not be underestimated. Interventions that limit or restrict choice (e.g. limiting or taxing air travel) may therefore be necessary to bring about fast and wide scale behaviour change.

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8 Industry response to the findings and recommendations

- 8.1 A workshop was held on 6th June, 2007 with senior members of the tourism industry for the research team to present the early results of the focus groups. The full results of the workshop are included in appendix I. Four questions were considered at this workshop;
- Do the results of the research fit with the experience of those in industry?
 - What actions can industry take to promote sustainability?
 - What policy options should be recommended to Defra?
 - What further research does industry want?
- 8.2 The workshop agreed that the findings of the focus groups concurred with what research the industry had conducted, whilst also confirming the feeling those present had about public attitudes towards sustainable tourism and leisure.
- 8.3 In terms of what the industry can do to promote sustainability, there was a feeling that the UK had already made good progress in this regard and could be considered a world leader. Work begun by the FTO to audit overseas properties for sustainability criteria was supported, but it was recognised that much more work needs to be conducted on indicators of sustainable tourism in order that the direction for progress can be identified, and action evaluated. Such quality developments will allow tour operators to compete on non-price grounds and provide a fillip for property owners to make

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sustainability improvements to their accommodation.

- 8.4 The industry workshop felt it was important for a person to be appointed who could act as a senior liaison between industry and government. The cross-department involvement in tourism by government makes communication difficult and leads to industry feeling excluded from decision-making. Work was recommended to encourage tourists to think about the impacts of their holidays and leisure time, while the Air Passenger Duty was felt to be in need for justification to the travelling public, and possibly a change in administration.
- 8.5 In terms of further research, work on a carbon calculator was supported to allow tourists to assess the impacts of their holiday decisions against their day to day lives. Such a calculator would fit with calls for research into assessing the various forms of tourism to determine which are more and less impacting. Such information would allow the public to become more aware of the impacts their decisions. Research is urgently needed to establish ways to make more tangible the problems and amelioration techniques available to promote sustainable tourism. This may link with suggestions of developing a food-labelling type system for tourism, but would be underpinned by more research into developing key indicators of sustainable tourism and leisure. The industry workshop recommended that in order for this research agenda to progress, work is needed to understand why those who do take more sustainable holidays do so.

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