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# ewelcome

an electronic bulletin from  
**Tourism Partnership North Wales**

## A go slow could boost tourism industry in North Wales

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## A go slow could boost tourism industry in North Wales

Tourism operators in North Wales should go slow in their drive to attract more visitors to holiday here.

That was the message from tourism consultant Alison Caffyn, speaker at a workshop hosted by Tourism Partnership North Wales.

The pace of slow tourism's growth in Wales is about to quicken thanks to the credit crunch, she said.

Instead of opting for expensive long-haul flights to countries with a strong currency many families are choosing to holiday in the UK.

Tourism Partnership are hoping that, as a result, people will take more time to savour the delights of North Wales with day visitors extending their stay in the area.

"In the last 12 months, since the recession began, there has been a lot of discussion about saving money, growing your own vegetables and such like as well as shopping and holidaying locally," said Alison.

"It's really about getting the message across that there are lots of great opportunities for slow tourism here in Wales.

"Slow tourism isn't expensive, if you choose to stay in the UK and buy locally rather than opting for a long-haul flight and buying big brands."

"The more gentle nature of slow tourism, which aims to connect people with places allowing

themselves time to savour the experience, is also at the heart of this emerging trend.

"Ideally, day visitors will opt to stay for a few days and those coming for a long weekend will stay even longer.

"North Wales offers a vast array of activities

including fishing, walking or shopping – and everything can be done at a relaxed pace.

Research by the Henley Centre for VisitBritain suggests that over the next ten years there will be a shift from buying goods to spending on services and experiences.



And they found that what people lack in their lives are not necessarily money and time but energy.

“Slow Tourism offers people a chance to regenerate and re-energise, said Alison. “Take a spa, yoga or meditation break, for example, places where you can chill out.

“Simply placing benches that offer quiet zones where people can sit and enjoy the view is something local authorities might think of to encourage slow tourism.

“Quality time with family is another undervalued aspect to this type of holiday, although harder to market.”

Broadband Blackspots and, in 2012, Olympics-Free Zones in Wales could also attract people wanting to ditch the BlackBerry and escape the rush rush of modern life.

Slow Tourism had had a lacklustre press until recently, said Alison.

“It may be that these negative connotations are why the idea of slow tourism hasn’t taken off but things are changing,” said Alison who comes from Ludlow, Britain’s first official Slow Town.

Slow Tourism grew out of the Slow Food movement that started in Italy in the 1980s as a reaction to the burgeoning number of fast food outlets there.

“The founders wanted to maintain the quality of life, local distinctiveness and connecting people to places,” said Alison. “They wanted to preserve the traditional artisan products and methods of production. But it’s not about being old-fashioned. The idea is that you can take up the best of new technology and habits and protect the old at the same time.”

However, there’s one area where speed is essential.

“Being able to access information and making bookings,” said Alison. “You need to be able to do that NOW! It’s a case of the right speed for everything.”

Tourism Partnership’s Regional Strategy Director, Dewi Davies, said that slow tourism offered a new way of thinking for tourism operators in the region.

He said: “In a nutshell, slow tourism is about making real connections with people, with places, the heritage, culture, the environment and the food - it’s about seeking out authentic experiences.

“Slow tourism doesn’t mean that you can’t do exciting things – it can be a fantastic canoe trip or sailing or white water rafting. It can be thrilling, it can give you a buzz.

“North Wales is perfect for getting away from the hubbub of urban, modern-day everyday life because you can go for fantastic walks in the hills.

“On the food front there’s fantastic produce and there’s fantastic heritage and culture which allows people to immerse themselves in it.

“I think North Wales hits most of the buttons for markets within a reasonable reach.”

