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PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN REGIONAL TOURISM PLANNING

Presented in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree
of
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BY

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ABSTRACT

Abstract of a dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of B.R.S (Hons).

Public Participation in Regional Tourism Planning

By K. M. Lee

Public participation is the key component of the community approach to tourism planning. The approach recognises that the public should take part in any tourism planning decision as it is they who must ultimately live with both the negative and positive outcomes of tourism.

This dissertation examines how public participation occurred in the preparation of the Canterbury Regional Tourism Strategy, an action based plan intended to guide the future of tourism in Canterbury. The public participation approach adopted was one of collaboration between key stakeholders that have an input in the provision of tourism in Canterbury. A variety of public participation techniques were used as part of an ongoing process. The advantages and disadvantages of this approach are analysed and its wider implications for tourism planning.

Specifically, this dissertation examines the nature of public participation and its effectiveness in the formation of the Canterbury Regional Tourism Strategy. The public participation process is described and analysed drawing upon the opinions of the individuals that took part in its preparation.

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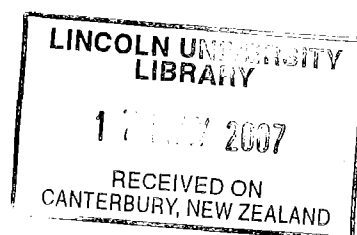


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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

"Tourism, like no other industry, relies on the goodwill and co-operation of local people because they are part of its product. Where development and planning does not fit in with local aspirations and capacities, resistance and hostility can raise the cost of business or destroy the industry's potential altogether. If tourism is to become the successful and self-perpetuating industry many have advocated, it needs to be planned and managed as a renewable resource industry, based on local capacities and community decision making" (Murphy, 1985:153).

As the level of tourism continues to rise in New Zealand, the level of impact upon local communities will ultimately increase. To reduce the likelihood of negative consequences, tourism planning is necessary. Planning is concerned with making choices about the future and alleviating problems (Gunn, 1988).

Ideally, tourism planning should occur at a variety of levels, including the national, regional and local levels (Gunn, 1988; Inskeep, 1991). Nationally, New Zealand takes part in little tourism planning and in recent years concern has been expressed regarding the need for the preparation of a national tourism plan (Collier, 1994). At a more local level, the *Local Government Act 1989, No.2* has implications for local authorities and tourism planning. The Act sets out provision for local authorities to prepare strategic and corporate plans for significant activities within their authority. Hence, if tourism is considered as a significant activity, either locally or regionally, there is scope for the preparation of tourism plans. The preparation of such plans is, however, not compulsory for local authorities (Perkins, Devlin, Simmons, and Batty, 1993). Therefore local authorities can determine whether or not a plan is necessary.

This dissertation focuses upon an example of a regional tourism plan - "The Canterbury Regional Tourism Strategy" prepared during 1994 and 1995 for the Canterbury Tourism Council. Strategic planning is characterised by an action orientated nature (Gunn, 1988), thus the Strategy sets out a vision for the future of tourism in the Canterbury for the next ten to fifteen years. The Strategy was prepared to provide co-ordination and direction for the future of tourism within the Canterbury region.

The Canterbury Tourism Council is not a local authority, but rather, is an independent incorporated organisation operating on a commercial basis (Canterbury Tourism Council, 1995). Thus, it is under no obligation to prepare strategic plans. Its main responsibility is the marketing of the city of Christchurch and the surrounding Canterbury area as a tourist destination. It is funded by members, currently about 600, the Christchurch City Council and the Canterbury district councils including Selwyn, Banks Peninsula, Hurunui, Ashburton and Waimakariri. Members include those with an involvement or interest in the tourism industry such as representatives of the accommodation, attraction and transport sectors (Canterbury Tourism Council, 1995).

Approximately 1.6 million tourists visit the Canterbury region annually (Canterbury Tourism, 1995). Given that tourism has the potential to impact upon community resources the preparation of the Strategy involved community input from throughout the Canterbury region. The process involved a selection of key stakeholders with an interest in the Canterbury tourism industry. The public participation approach adopted was very much a targeted approach. Given the resource constraints of the Canterbury Tourism Council in terms of finance, time and staff, such an approach was deemed appropriate.

This research focuses upon the concept of public participation and how it was utilised in the preparation of the Strategy. Public participation in a broad sense can be thought of as the inclusion of members of the public, both individuals and groups in any decision making process. The Canterbury Regional Tourism Strategy is employed as a case study to interpret how public participation can be applied in regional tourism planning. It must be stressed that it is not the intent of this research to analyse the contents of the Strategy but rather, the process used in its preparation.

1.1 Aim and Objectives

The aim of this dissertation is **to examine the nature of public participation and its effectiveness in the formation of the Canterbury Regional Tourism Strategy.**

The following objectives are based upon this aim, they are as follows:

- 1) to explain the concept of public participation;

- 2) to identify and describe the public participation process used in the formation of the Canterbury Regional Tourism Strategy;
- 3) to provide an analysis of the advantages and disadvantages of the public participation process used in the formation of the Canterbury Regional Tourism Strategy; and
- 4) to determine whether or not the public participation process adopted for the preparation of the Canterbury Regional Tourism Strategy meets with the criteria of the community tourism planning model.

1.2 Outline of The Dissertation

Chapter Two provides background detail of the public participation process utilised in the preparation of the Strategy¹. A flow diagram is presented as a simplification of this process. Chapter Three explores the concept of public participation drawing upon literature in the public participation field. The majority of the literature is internationally based, particularly in relation to public participation in tourism planning. Where available, New Zealand resources have been utilised.

Chapter Four explains the research methodology undertaken to determine the effectiveness of the public participation process utilised in the formation of the Strategy. Following this, Chapter Five identifies the participants that took part in the public participation process and the rationale for such an approach. Discussion occurs in relation to non-participants and the constraints influencing the approach adopted.

Chapter Six focuses upon the participant's views of the management of the participation process while Chapter Seven discusses the public participation process in terms of the opportunities provided for participants to take part in the Strategy's preparation. Chapter Eight evaluates the success of the public participation process adopted from the perspectives of the participants and the staff organising the process. Chapter Nine draws the research to a conclusion highlighting the key issues raised with respect to public participation in tourism planning.

¹ The Canterbury Regional Tourism Strategy may also be referred to as the Strategy

CHAPTER TWO

THE CANTERBURY REGIONAL TOURISM STRATEGY - THE ORIGINS

The Canterbury Regional Tourism Strategy was published in July 1995. It was prepared jointly by Jenny Calkin and Associates and Vaux Oelrichs Partners, of Australia, for the Canterbury Tourism Council, with sponsorship from Christchurch International Airport Limited² (Jenny Calkin and Associates-Vaux Oelrichs Partners, 1995).

A key reason for preparing the plan was the need to clarify the responsibilities of various players within the Canterbury tourism industry. *"There is a need for planning, advocacy, lobbying and liaising with different sectors of the industry and community. It's all a grey area that needs to be worked out"* (Wilke, A. pers. comm. 1996).

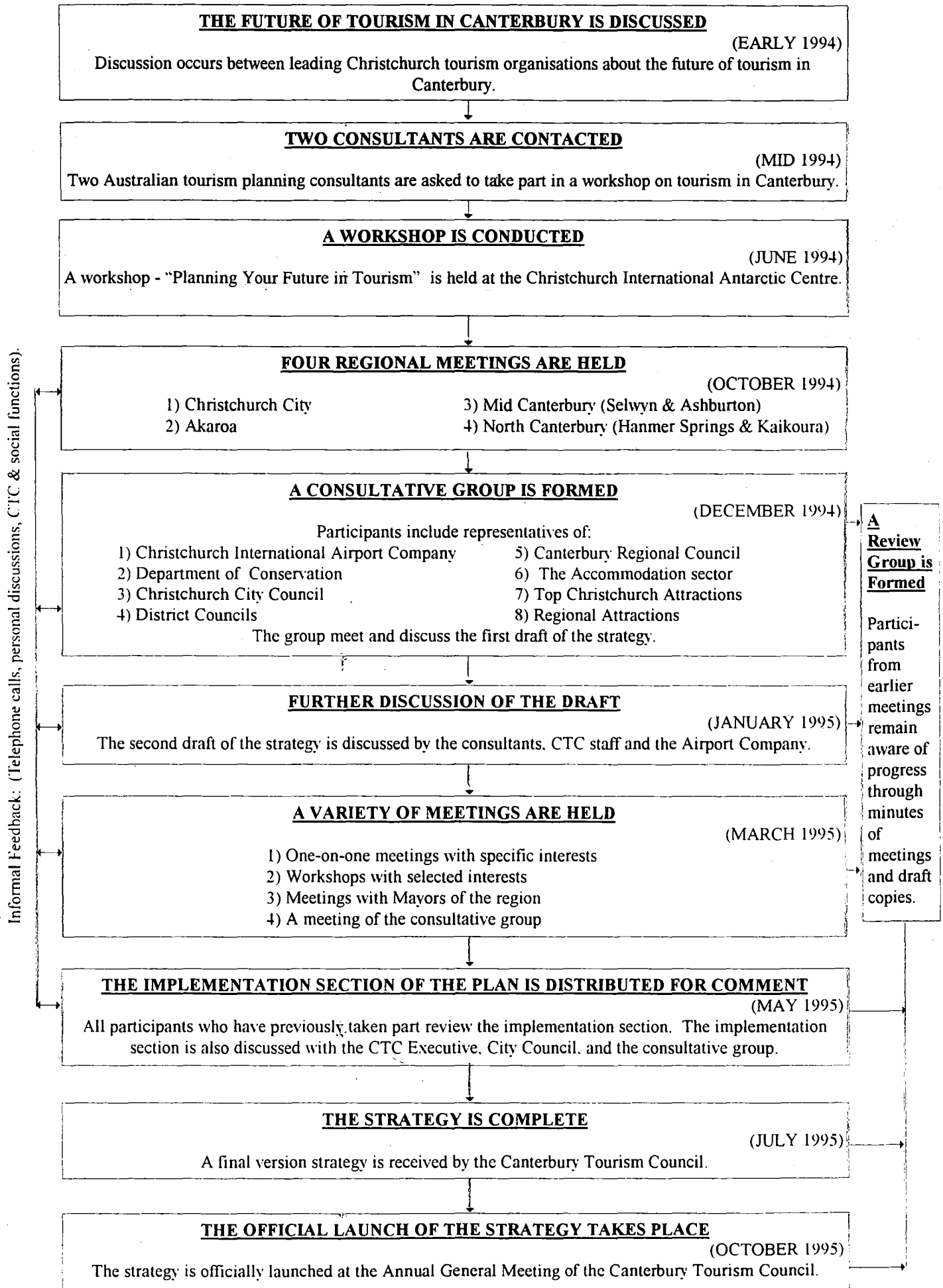
The plan was prepared to *"assist the Canterbury Tourism Council, together with industry, identify and target those markets, both domestic and international, that will bring the greatest benefits to the Region in a sustainable fashion. In this regard, the plan provides a focused and co-ordinated approach to the development and marketing of Canterbury, Christchurch and the Districts"* (John Clarke, cited in Jenny Calkin and Associates and Vaux Oelrichs Partners, 1995).

Both consultants were known to the personnel of the Airport Company who had worked with the consultants in various tourism groups, for example, the Pacific Asia Travel Association. The consultants have produced similar strategic tourism plans for different regions in Australia and are well qualified in tourism planning. Figure 1 provides a simplification of the public participation process that occurred in the preparation of the Strategy.

² Christchurch International Airport Limited is also referred to as the Airport Company.

Figure 1: The Public Participation Process Used in the Preparation of 'The Canterbury Regional Tourism Strategy'.

(adapted from Wilke, 1995)



2.1 Timeline of the Strategy's Preparation

(adapted from Wilke, 1995).

The idea of preparing the Canterbury Regional Tourism Strategy was conceived in June 1994. From that time, the Strategy took eighteen months to develop. An outline of the preparation process is identified in the following timeline:

Early 1994

Preparation of the Strategy took place over a period of eighteen months, beginning early in 1994. The leading players in the Canterbury tourism industry such as the CTC and the Christchurch International Airport Limited discussed the present direction of tourism in Canterbury. This occurred on an informal basis. By June 1994, two Australian consultants known to the personnel of the Airport Company through association with the Pacific Asia Travel Association had been contacted and an initial workshop conducted. The workshop named "Planning Your Future in Tourism" was organised by the Airport Company and held at the Christchurch International Antarctic Centre. At this stage, the decision to prepare a strategic tourism plan was not finalised. It was more a situation of determining what the views of people within the tourism industry were and possible directions for the future of tourism in Canterbury. Issues discussed included the changing face of tourism, changes in Canterbury as a destination, a swot analysis identifying strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats for tourism, important issues facing the region and the role of local government. This led to the conclusion that there was a need for a regional tourism plan in Canterbury.

October 1994

A series of four regional meetings were conducted throughout Canterbury. Areas covered included Christchurch, Akaroa, North Canterbury-Hanmer Springs and Kaikoura, Mid Canterbury-Selwyn and Ashburton. The four areas were selected for ease of access, thus ensuring a central location for each meeting. The CTC advised the consultants on who to invite based upon their knowledge of the region and contacts within the tourism industry. Such meetings were undertaken to determine the views of the various districts, specific local issues and how each district perceived its identity. This provided a crucial information gathering source for the consultants early in the process.

December 1994

A small consultative group was formed consisting of twenty participants from prior meetings. Such individuals were selected based upon who the organisers perceived should be involved to ensure a wide cross-section of view points from the tourism industry. Participants in the group did vary from time to time as not all participants could attend each meeting (Wilke, A. pers. comm.1996). Participants included individuals from the Christchurch Airport Company, Christchurch City Council, District Councils, Canterbury Regional Council, the Department of Conservation, top attractions, regional and district attractions and hotels. A meeting was held with the consultative group based upon the first draft of the Strategy prepared by the consultants.

At this meeting, the vision, mission and guiding principles were identified (Wilke, 1995). Those involved in earlier meetings were kept in touch via minutes from such meetings and were invited to comment upon subsequent drafts. Such individuals were referred to as the review group.

January 1995

Discussion and feedback arising from prior consultative group meetings was conveyed to the consultants. A second draft was prepared. A meeting was held between the consultants, the CTC staff and the Airport Company. It involved *"distilling the findings to date to a workable structure or initial strategy"* (Wilke, 1995).

March 1995

A second series of meetings was undertaken with the consultants and specific interest groups. This included individual meetings with interest groups and workshops with various groups of players from the tourism industry. Such participants included:

- Regional visitor attraction managers
- Accommodation managers
- Christchurch City Council planners
- Mayors within the region
- Department of Conservation staff
- Canterbury Regional Council councillors and planners
- Canterbury Tourism Council membership
- The consultative group

Meetings were focussed upon a draft of the Strategy. The purpose of the meetings ranged from explaining to participants the reasoning behind the Strategy's preparation to how it had been prepared and discussion of its contents. A further issue that arose was that of the identity of Canterbury in reference to Christchurch as a garden city. Debate arose as this image referred only to the city, not the entire region (Wilke, A. pers. comm. 1996).

May 1995

The third draft of the plan was distributed amongst the review group. The consultants discussed the draft implementation section (a specific section of the Strategy) with the CTC Executive, Christchurch City Council and the consultative group. The discussion was more of a "*rubber stamping*" occasion finalising and giving approval to the completed copy of the Strategy (Wilke, A.1996, pers. comm. 1996).

July 1995

The final version of the Strategy was sent to the CTC from the Australian consultants. An official launch took place during October 1995 at the annual general meeting of the CTC. An invitation was extended to members of the CTC to attend the launch. In total, about 100 individuals attended.

... the present

Since the completion of the Strategy, there have been difficulties with its implementation. Several attempts instigated by the CTC to obtain resources to implement the Strategy have proved unsuccessful. A community liaison group (a step in the Strategy) has met on several occasions. However, the outcomes of such discussions remain minimal. The main reason being a lack of resources to achieve the actions in the plan. Furthermore, apathetic attitudes by some individuals within the tourism industry are apparent. Individuals tend to be more concerned with the day to day activities of their businesses or organisations and generating profit. Resources in terms of time and finance have limited the extent to which the goals and aims of the plan can be implemented. "*It takes time, co-ordination and effort*" (Wilke, A. pers. comm. 1996).

CHAPTER THREE

LITERATURE REVIEW - THE CONCEPT OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

3.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the concept of public participation. It focuses upon some theoretical perspectives in relation to public participation. However, greater emphasis is placed upon practical issues and the need and procedures for public participation. Such discussion provides a contextual background to aid interpretation of the public participation that occurred in the Canterbury Regional Tourism Strategy.

3.2 Defining Public Participation

No clear consensus regarding the meaning of public participation exists. Several definitions are provided below:

"Participation takes many forms. It is a slippery concept easy neither to define nor to execute and, like 'democracy', it conjures up socially desirable connotations which can all too easily be countermanded in practice" (O'Riordan, 1977:159).

and, *"It implies an interactive process between members of the public, individually or in groups, and representatives of a government agency, with the aim of giving citizens a direct voice in decisions that affect them" (Munro-Clark, 1992: 13).*

Munro-Clark (1992) recognises the inadequacies of this definition herself, stating that it is all very well to recognise the need for public participation, however, clarification of the form it should take is just as vital.

Smith (1984) recognises that public participation is not just about methods to achieve input from the public nor is it just a process of involving the public. Public participation should be thought of as a process that is both open and democratic rather than simply a technique.

From the above interpretations it is clear that public participation can be thought of as both an end in itself as well as a means of achieving that end. This implies the process

itself is just as important as the final outcome. Central to most definitions is the ideal of a democratic society. This is addressed briefly in the following section.

3.3 The Purpose of Public Participation

In democratic societies it is believed that individuals have a right to be informed and consulted about political decisions and to put forward views on matters which impact upon their lives (Sewell and Coppock, 1977; White, 1982). Democracy is based upon the ideals of responsiveness and accountability to the public and future generations. In reality, elected officials chosen to represent the public interest tend to know little about the views of the public on most issues. Only a minority of the public have any idea of the extent to which elected representatives are looking after their interests (O'Riordan, 1977).

Whether or not public participation occurs is very much in the hands of decision makers. Some decision makers perceive their role to be one of a technical expert. Others view their role to be more of an advocate for the public. Technical experts tend to value "objective" technical information reports more highly than subjective input from the public. Thus, the decision maker or person in charge of the particular plan or project are responsible for the level and extent to which public participation is utilised (Kathlene and Martin, 1991).

A variety of reasons exist for inclusion of members of the public in the decision making process. Firstly, the public can provide knowledge in areas in which decision makers lack expertise (Connor, 1982; Switzer, 1978). Residents often have a more detailed knowledge of the occurrences in their community compared to those that live elsewhere. Therefore, inclusion of such knowledge can provide a more balanced outcome, rather, than reliance on technical expert information alone.

Involvement by the public increases its own understanding and knowledge of the planning and policy making process (Switzer, 1978). Increasingly, the public want to be involved in the "creation" of plans and policies, rather than just to be informed about the various issue once the plan is prepared (Connor, 1982). In contrast, throughout the public participation literature, a consistent trend is the high level of apathy by the public towards public participation (Sewell and Coppock, 1977; James, 1991). *"Society is still composed of a majority of non-participants, and that situation is unlikely to change"* (Zube, 1984:56).

The public tend to only want to participate if they are directly impacted upon or believe that their involvement will have some influence (Sewell and Coppock, 1977).

To determine the goals of any planning issue it is necessary to determine the values, preferences, attitudes and priorities of those likely to be affected. If planners fail to do this, formulating decisions based upon what they perceive is best for the public or based upon their perceptions of the public's views could result in later difficulties (Connor, 1982). By undertaking public participation it is more likely that the wants of a greater cross-section of the community are met. This occurs as the planner becomes aware of the different views of the various groups that make up society (Switzer, 1978).

Including the public from the beginning of the planning process can lessen the likelihood of huge financial costs later in the process. The public may foresee problems experts have failed to recognise, therefore, amendments can be implemented before potential problems arise. A plan may require that the public alter its behaviour. If the public is involved in the planning process, it is more likely to be aware, interested and convinced that a new behaviour is necessary (Switzer, 1978).

3.4 Who Should be Involved?

"There is no single "community" whose wishes can be readily established and accommodated. All communities consist of a variety of groups, some with conflicting goals and values" (Switzer, 1978:3).

In a perfect situation according to a 'democratic' analysis the views of all those who have a legitimate interest in a matter should be taken into account. However, this raises all sorts of difficulties, in terms of determining the nature of a legitimate interest. Furthermore, who should have the power to make such a determination? The legitimate interests often tend to be those involved in interest groups likely to be impacted upon or those individuals who have made their concerns known (Sewell and Coppock, 1977).

An interest group is a group which has a shared political goal or interest (Mulgan, 1989). Public interest groups tend to consist of the socio-economic elite. Therefore, by relying on interest groups as a means of public participation it is likely that a biased view of what constitutes the public interest is put forward. However, this can be alleviated through

inclusion of a range of interests in relation to the issue in the planning process. By this means, it is more likely that an equitable outcome is reached (Smith, 1984).

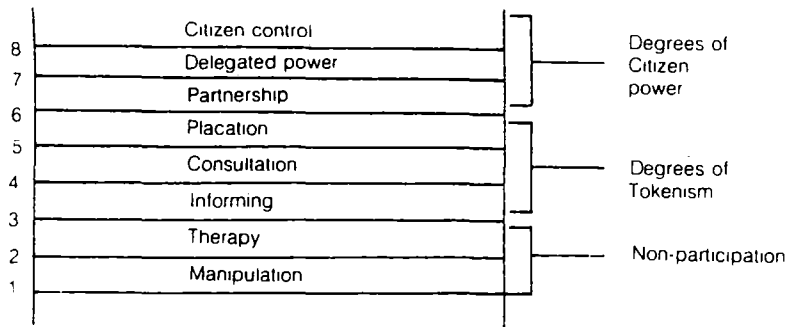
Several obstacles exist to public participation from the perspectives of both the organisers and the public. Firstly, from the perspective of the organiser it is generally recognised that most forms of public participation tend to lengthen the decision making process, particularly with regard to the time and the commitment required by organisers. This impacts upon the efficiency of resource allocation in terms of time and finances (Thorn, 1984). Secondly, from the perspective of the public, there are several factors that influence a decision to become involved. These include the time or commitment required, how important the issue is to the individual concerned, the participant's level of expertise and knowledge in relation to the issue and whether or not they perceive their input will have any impact upon the final outcome (Dahl, 1970, cited in Kathlene and Martin, 1991).

Even if public participation occurs there is an ethical dilemma consistently brought up in the literature of representation in public participation. There are significant groups who do not participate, such as the poor or various racial groups (Arnstein, 1969; Sewell and Coppock, 1977). The majority of those that participate are male, middle class and well educated in both New Zealand and overseas (Thornley, 1977, Fagence, 1977 cited in James 1991). Therefore, the views of participants cannot be assumed to be representative of the majority that choose not to or who are unable to participate (Switzer, 1978).

3.5 A Model of Public Participation

Perhaps the most well-known model of public participation is Arnstein's (1969) participation ladder. The ladder separates participation into eight distinct levels, as shown in figure 2.

Figure 2: A Ladder of Citizen Participation



(Source: Palmer, 1984:14)

The model provides three broad categories of participation. These include non-participation, tokenism and citizen power. Briefly, each category is explained as follows:

- 1) **manipulation** - power is very much in the hands of decision makers. Members of the public may be involved in the decision making process but it tends to be very much "educating" the public. That is, it involves explaining what is to be done.
- 2) **therapy** - a focus is placed upon "curing" the problems of members of the public as opposed to the factors actually causing the problems.
- 3) **informing** - this step is often characterised by one-way flow of information from the decision maker to the public.
- 4) **consultation** - the public is given the opportunity to make its views known. However, there is no guarantee that such views will actually be taken into account.
- 5) **placation** - decision makers have the overriding authority to make decisions. However, minority groups are given the opportunity to make their views known.
- 6) **partnership** - the public negotiate with those in power.
- 7) **delegated power** - the public has dominant decision making authority. This may involve some negotiation.
- 8) **citizen control** - the public has full managerial power.

For further explanation of each of the categories the reader is encouraged to refer to Arnstein (1969). Several criticisms of the ladder have, however, been expressed. Hallet (1987 cited in Fookes and Van Dadelszen 1988), has criticised the uni-dimensional nature of the model. The model assumes that participation is linear moving to either full citizen power or at the other extreme a level of non-participation. Arnstein (1969) herself recognises that there are limitation in categorising levels of participation. In specific cases it is quite likely that there are many levels of participation and in some instances an overlap may occur.

The ladder neglects to consider why some individuals choose not to participate, the techniques by which public participation can occur and the issues in which the public chooses to become involved Hallet (1987 cited in Fookes and Van Dadelszen, 1988). Arnstein (1969) suggests that some of the reasons why people choose not to participate include power relationships by decision makers, lack of financial resources and limited education for minority groups, apathetic attitudes and general distrust towards public

participation. However, in light of such limitations the model's main advantage is that it recognises there are various participation levels (Arnstein, 1969).

3.6 Public Participation Techniques

The following section focuses upon public participation at a more practical level examining specific participation techniques. "*Participation is an evolutionary procedure, not a static programme*" (O'Riordan, 1977:164). This means one cannot assume that how public participation is planned to occur when first embarking on a plan or project will necessarily reflect its final form. Public participation involves people. The behaviour of individuals is not easily predictable, therefore it is likely that as the public participation process progresses some degree of adaptability in relation to the approach taken may be necessary.

Within the literature a diversity of public participation techniques are discussed. There is no right or wrong method of involving the public. Each method has a series of strengths and weaknesses (Zube, 1984). There is no consensus regarding what techniques should be used, but rather it is very much dependent upon the circumstances. However, it is generally accepted that it is better to use more than one technique. By doing so, a wider cross section of the public may be included. This ensures that the disadvantages of particular techniques are counteracted. Different techniques may also be more appropriate at different stages of the process of involving the public (O'Riordan, 1977; Switzer, 1978; Smith, 1984).

Participation techniques requiring a high level of commitment in terms of time and level of articulateness, information or knowledge required of the participant can act as deterrents to participation (Sinclair, 1986). Switzer (1978) puts forward several suggestions for determining which techniques are most appropriate. Firstly, it is necessary to determine the goals and objectives of those organising public participation. The goal may be to obtain the response of the public to a prepared plan or elicit from the public the issues that they think should be included in the plan. Secondly, it is necessary to determine which individuals and groups should have their voices heard and how best they can be reached. Kathlene and Martin (1991) suggest it is also necessary to think about the type of response required.

In determining which techniques to implement there is a trade-off between depth and breadth of coverage. Some techniques are useful for providing the public with information and gaining an in-depth response, for example, a workshop. However, they tend not to be very effective at reaching a large cross section of the public. Other techniques are better at obtaining a much wider level of involvement from the public, for example a questionnaire, however, usually they only obtain a superficial response (Taylor, Bryan, and Goodrich, 1995).

It is beyond the scope of this literature review to detail all possible techniques of public participation. Rather, references will be provided that the reader is encouraged to refer to for further background (Switzer, 1978; Glass, 1979; Sarkissian, 1994).

However, a typology of the main categories of participation techniques is presented and a model of some of the more common means. Discussion follows based upon the techniques employed in the preparation of the Canterbury Regional Tourism Strategy.

Glass (1979) develops a typology of participation techniques. This consists of four categories, including unstructured, structured, active process and passive techniques.

This is indicated below:

1) Unstructured Techniques

Although techniques falling into this category are unstructured it does not necessarily mean that no thought is given to their implementation. The primary aim of unstructured participation methods is direct contact between the decision maker and the public leading to an exchange of information. Unstructured techniques provide minimal control over who participates, the numbers participating and the type of information produced. Examples include, neighbourhood meetings, drop-in centres and public hearings. The benefits of these sorts of techniques include the opportunity to meet with a relatively large proportion of the public and the establishment of face-to-face contact between the public and decision makers.

2) Structured Techniques

Structured participation techniques provide the decision maker with some degree of control over who participates and how many participate. Such techniques involve a specific selection process where members of the public are chosen to participate by the decision maker. If this is undertaken in an objective manner, it is possible that

representatives of the various groups that make up a community can be heard. If the issues relate to a specific group from the community, participants may be selected from that group. Examples include, citizen advisory committees, citizen review boards and citizen task forces.

The main purposes of such techniques are education and facilitation of support for new plans or projects. Members of the public selected to participate can increase support within the community and educate the wider community. However, such techniques are of limited use for exchange of information as relatively few members of the public are involved. Although the decision maker has control over such techniques the resulting information should not be used for further decision making or assumed to be representative of the wider population.

3) Active Process Techniques

Participation in this category is active as the public is involved in a series of activities designed to produce specific information for the decision maker. Decision makers have control over who and how many participate. Examples include the nominal group process, analysis of judgement policy and values analysis. The main advantage of these techniques is their ability to obtain information from the public. However, they are limited in the sense that no allowance is made for a two-way exchange of information.

4) Passive Process Techniques

Techniques falling into this category are the most structured. As the public does not have direct contact with the decision maker its involvement is therefore quite passive. Examples include surveys of the public and the delphi technique. The main disadvantages with such techniques is that they do not allow for exchange of information, education or building of support for plans or projects. However, the information that is collected from such techniques can provide a useful guide for plan preparation.

The objectives of each category create a guide for the selection of techniques. However, the above typology is of little use in explaining how various techniques should be undertaken (Glass, 1979).

Some of the more common public participation techniques put forward by Vindasius (1974 cited in Sewell and Coppock 1977) are indicated in figure 3.

Figure 3: Public Participation Techniques

- 1) Public opinion polls and other surveys
- 2) Referenda
- 3) The ballot box
- 4) Public hearings
- 5) Advocacy planning
- 6) Letters to the editor or public officials
- 7) Representations of pressure groups
- 8) Protests and demonstrations
- 9) Court actions
- 10) Public meetings
- 11) Workshops or seminars
- 12) Taskforces

(Source: Vindasius, 1974, cited in Sewell and Coppock, 1977:3)

The time involved in implementing the above techniques gradually increases as does the level of interaction between the decision maker and the public.

The following discussion focuses upon the public participation techniques employed in the preparation of the Canterbury Regional Tourism Strategy:

'Brainstorming' is useful to generate a large number of ideas which may provide potential solutions to problems in a relatively short period of time. The key aim of such a technique is to derive as many solutions as possible (Rawlinson, 1981). Any idea, whether far fetched or ridiculous is given equal importance (Sarkissian, 1994). Rawlinson (1981) argues that the size of a group for brainstorming should not be too large as in a large group it is difficult to ensure every participant is given the opportunity to make their views known.

One of the more common forms of public participation is the **'public meeting'**. *"As soon as community participation is mentioned in any practical context, someone is sure to say: let's call a meeting"* (Thorne and Percell, 1992:131). The main advantage of the public meeting is that it is a useful means of communicating information to a large number of people (Switzer, 1978). It is useful as an initial means to put forward a plan or proposal

and encourage discussion. However, according to Thorne and Percell (1992) the reality is that by the time a public meeting is called the matter already may be well under way. That is, considerable progress may have already occurred, hence, the involvement of the public is more of an afterthought.

The main problem with the public meeting is that it can often be a scene of confrontation (Connor, 1982; Switzer, 1978; Thorne and Percell, 1992). The use of a public meeting alone as a participation technique does not necessarily mean all representatives of the public are involved (Smith, 1974; Blackford, 1990; Keogh, 1990). The size of the meeting can also be disadvantageous. Large meetings tend to encourage only the most sure and well-spoken. To overcome the problems inherent with public meetings, it is useful to break large audiences into small discussion groups and provide an opportunity for each group to report back, thus encouraging involvement and response from participants (Switzer, 1978).

Public meetings can only work as a participation technique if size is kept to a minimum or participants are split into smaller groups. Participants are therefore forced to listen and to discuss the ideas of others and eventually reach some sort of compromise. Small groups enable participants to make their opinions known directly to the planner, also providing opportunity for immediate feedback from the planner (Sinclair, 1986).

Research conducted by Thorne and Percell (1992), provides light on who actually attends public meetings. Reasons given for lack of attendance include insufficient information regarding the issue and lack of understanding of the relevance of the issue to themselves or their interest group. They further discuss how *"meetings tend to become a forum for pre-existing lobbies"* (Thorne and Percell, 1992:133). An example is provided of an occurrence in Sydney relating to recreational needs. A selection of local interest groups were invited to attend meetings to discuss the recreational needs of the area. Participants were invited that had specific expertise in the recreation field as well as members of the general public. However, the meetings did not proceed as at first planned. Some invited individuals brought along prepared statements of the demands of their group and just read these out. They attended the meeting to lobby the decision makers, rather than attending to learn and listen to what others had to say and participate in a two-way discussion.

The term '**workshop**' is often used interchangeably with '**seminar**'. A workshop *"involves a small gathering of people to discuss specific topics, to exchange ideas or to solve particular problems"* (Seeking, 1984: 12). Workshops usually consist of representatives of interest groups invited with the purpose of sharing ideas and providing feedback (Zube, 1984; Sinclair, 1986). There is no set format for conduct of workshops. Workshops are a concentrated form of participation requiring considerable input from the participants particularly in terms of time (Seeking, 1984; Zube, 1984; James, 1991). It is characterised by a flow of information between participants as opposed to just giving out information (Seeking, 1984).

'Individual discussions' with direct interests are one of the more simplistic forms of public participation and provide the opportunity for the individuals involved to make their views known directly to the decision maker. This involves discussion with individuals or groups perceived by the decision maker to have an interest in the issue at hand. Such discussion tends to be relatively loosely structured with the purpose of gaining insight into the perspectives of the interests concerned. Compared to previously discussed techniques it is fairly undemanding of the participants (Sinclair, 1986).

3.7 Workshop and Meeting Presentation Style

At a more technical level, presentation style of information at public meetings and workshops is very important. Different presentation styles are appropriate for various audiences. Diagrams are useful to explain complicated projects to lay audiences (Collins, D. pers. comm. 1996). One of the more unsuitable means of presenting information is the use of long speeches. More useful means include diagrams, charts and audiovisual presentations (Switzer, 1978). Meetings with no audio-visual equipment can be quite uninteresting. Audio-visual equipment includes a variety of equipment from basic flip charts and overhead projectors to video equipment (Williams, 1987). An overhead projector is a useful visual aid to communicate information to any group size (Murray, 1983).

It is useful to distribute written material prior to meetings or workshops to familiarise the audience with issues that may arise, thus allowing participants time to prepare if necessary (Switzer, 1978). When undertaking public participation it is necessary to determine what information is appropriate to the situation and by whom it is required. Information distribution should be an ongoing component of the planning process. To achieve this, it

is necessary to determine the issues in which individuals or groups could potentially have an interest (Keogh, 1990).

Room layout can influence the effectiveness of participation. A theatre style room layout is suitable for medium to large groups. This involves a series of rows, often with several aisles down the middle. Another common layout is the conference style which tends to be suited to small groups. It involves a large table or series of tables pushed together in the shape of a square or rectangle. The participants sit around the table facing the centre. A further layout is the u-shape. This is useful for small groups or medium sized groups of up to fifty participants. The layout is characterised by its u-shape, formed by pushing tables together, with the end or a side set aside for the speaker (Williams, 1987). It is important to consider that tables or rows of chairs separating people into columns, one behind the other, can act as barriers, therefore influencing the likelihood of participation (Materka, 1986).

The issues raised in the above discussion are directly related to the inclusion of the public in tourism planning. The community approach to tourism planning is discussed in the following section as are the characteristics of tourism that impede public involvement in tourism planning. An example is provided of how the public can be included.

3.8 Public Participation in Tourism Planning

Central to the community approach to tourism planning is the belief that the public should be involved in determining the components of the community that are offered to tourists (Simmons, 1994). Such reasoning has arisen through the potential of tourism to impact upon the resources and way of life of local communities. It is at the community level that the negative and positive impacts of tourism (economic, social and environmental) are most apparent. It is the community that must live with the cumulative outcomes of such impacts (Murphy, 1985; Haywood, 1988).

Given that communities can be impacted upon by tourism, it is necessary to determine who should be involved in making decisions about its future and the means by which the community can be included. As Seeking (1980 cited in Murphy, 1985) claims, tourism planning should not be left to "experts" in the tourism field alone. The following comment clarifies this claim:

"The affairs of the industry should be deliberately subjected to public scrutiny and debate ... All major policy proposals should be thoroughly ventilated in public before becoming officially adopted as policy" (Seeking, 1980:257, cited in Murphy, 1985:172).

The very nature of tourism as a fragmented industry (Mill and Morrison, 1985; Haywood, 1988; Leiper, 1989) presents difficulties in determining who should be involved and co-ordination of that involvement. Jamal and Getz (1994) suggest that the following interests are included: local government; local tourism organisations; business representatives; regional planners; marketeers and community organisations such as social welfare; and, health organisations. Such interests make up the *"interrelated community tourism system"* (Jamal and Getz, 1994: 198). Haywood (1988) suggests similar participants. He stresses the need to include a variety of interest groups and individuals to form a "partnership" approach.

Jamal and Getz (1994) discuss an approach to the inclusion of the public in tourism planning. The approach known as "collaboration" involves selection of stakeholders chosen to represent relevant public interests. Collaboration is characterised by a joint decision making process consisting of key stakeholders. Gunn (1988) briefly touches upon the idea of collaboration, particularly with respect to commercial tourism interests coming together to form plans. He also discusses how tourism planning should not necessarily involve input from high level government. Rather, participants from both the public and private sectors should be included. Co-operation by both sectors will ensure that it is not just the public sector that is left to deal with the negative impacts of tourism. Involvement by both sectors will ensure that a plan is more likely to be implemented. Through the public participation process it is more likely that a greater understanding of each other's goals is achieved (Mill and Morrison, 1985).

Stakeholders are defined as *"the actors with an interest in a common problem or issue and include all individuals, groups, or organisations directly influenced by the actions others take to solve a problem"* (Gray 1989:5 cited in Jamal and Getz, 1994:194). This raises the issue of how tourism planners determine which stakeholders are regarded as legitimate. Gray (1985 cited in Jamal and Getz, 1994) defines a legitimate stakeholder as those with the right (someone who is impacted upon by the activity of other stakeholders) and capacity (resources and skills to participate).

If stakeholders are not legitimate, it may mean that the interests of the public fail to be represented. Hence, it is necessary to ensure that a mix of key stakeholders is involved to ensure adequate representation of the general public.

3.9 Summary

This chapter has highlighted both the need for public participation and the factors that constrain its occurrence. The very nature of the tourism industry presents considerable difficulty in deciding who should be included in any tourism planning decision and the methods by which inclusion should occur.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Twenty qualitative interviews were undertaken in the months of July and August 1996 with key stakeholders who have an interest in tourism in Canterbury. Contact was made with the staff of the CTC during April 1996 to gain background information on the preparation of the Strategy and to identify the participants that took part in the preparation of the Canterbury Regional Tourism Strategy. The key stakeholders included the Christchurch City Council, the Canterbury Regional Council, district councils (Selwyn, Ashburton, Waimakariri, Hurunui and Banks Peninsula), the Department of Conservation, members of the hotel industry, top attractions, district attractions, non participants (Maori and Federated Farmers) and the Australian based consultants who prepared the plan.

A complete list of all the participants was unavailable, therefore it was decided that a snowball sampling method would be employed. Snowball sampling is a referral technique, whereby participants are asked to suggest other individuals or groups whom may be helpful to the study at hand (Singleton, Straits and Straits, 1993). This method was considered most appropriate as some individuals did not wish to participate for confidentiality reasons while some participants had since changed jobs and were difficult to contact.

An initial letter was sent to participants of each of the stakeholder groups identified above. This explained the nature of the research and asked whether they wished to be a part of the study (refer to appendix 1). A follow up telephone call was made to determine whether or not they wished to become involved and to arrange a suitable time to meet. Several individuals who were contacted felt that they did not play an integral part in the plan preparation. However, they did suggest other individuals who might be useful to the study.

Participants representing the public sector tended to be more willing to take part in the research than those representing the private sector. Private sector individuals often commented that they were busy with work commitments or that for reasons of protecting the name of their business they did not wish to be involved.

Interviews can take the form of several formats as shown by the following comment:

"an interview can be a one-time, brief exchange, say five minutes over the telephone, or it can take place over multiple, lengthy sessions, sometimes spanning days" (Fontana and Frey, 1994:361). The majority of the interviews undertaken for this study involved a face-to-face verbal exchange. This is one of the more common interviewing methods (Fontana and Frey, 1994). Three interviews involved a telephone call (the consultants and Federated Farmers) and four took the form of a questionnaire sent via the mail. This was unavoidable due to the fact that some participants no longer lived in Canterbury, while the Maori participant proved difficult to contact by means other than a questionnaire.

Interviews were semi-structured based around a set of pre-established questions (refer to appendix 2). The majority of the questions were open-ended as it was felt that this would allow participants to express their own opinions, thus leading to a more in-depth response. In contrast, 'yes-no' type questions tend to be easily summarised, however they do place limitations upon the type of responses individuals may give. Thus, there is the chance the researcher may miss what the interviewee really thinks (Saslow, 1992).

Each interviewee was asked the same set of questions. However, due to the flexible nature of qualitative interviewing, other questions were included according to issues that arose during the interview. Some questions were left out if not considered appropriate to the interviewee's involvement or if a response had already been given via a previous question (Fontana and Frey, 1994). Prior to the interview, permission was obtained to tape record the responses. One interviewee requested that the interview not be taped for confidentiality reasons but did allow some written notes to be taken. Interviews lasted for half of an hour to one hour.

The interview technique employed had both advantages and disadvantages. The presence of the researcher at the interview enabled clarification of questions that the respondent did not at first understand. However, some degree of bias was unavoidable. This can occur through how the interviewee reacts to the interviewer. The interviewee may try and alter their response according to what they think the interviewer wishes to hear. Other factors such as the age, sex and interview experience of the interviewer can influence the success of the interview (Fontana and Frey, 1994). A further disadvantage that interviewees often commented upon was that the preparation of the Strategy had occurred some time ago therefore some responses were based largely upon memory.

Interviews were transcribed within a few hours of each interview. The notes taken at one interview were rewritten for further clarification. A summary page of the main points of each interview was prepared as well as observations made during the interview that might be of relevance for later analysis.

After completion of all the interviews several photocopies were made of each transcript. According to Lofland and Lofland (1984) it is important to keep a full copy of the transcript to enable the researcher to think about the wider context. The researcher can therefore review transcripts from beginning to end and think about larger patterns of analysis.

To aid analysis, a filing system was created. Lofland and Lofland (1984) discuss three types of files including mundane files, analytic files and fieldwork files. Mundane files are basically a file prepared on each individual interviewed consisting of a full copy of responses to interview questions and any further information given by the interviewee. Analytic files consist of responses to interview questions and notes regarding their meaning. Fieldwork files include information about the research process. This is useful for later preparation of the research methodology in the final report.

Transcripts were cut up into sections corresponding to responses to each of the interview questions and allocated to the appropriate analytic file. In total, 23 files were prepared, each created according to the interview questions. Examples included the "advantages of public participation" and "conflict". All the answers of relevance to the particular file were pasted onto a separate sheet of paper to aid analysis. In some instances where the responses of an interview fitted into several categories it was placed in several files. These cut and pasted sheets of paper were read several times and notes prepared of the main issues that interviewees raised, theoretical ideas of relevance and quotations that may be useful for the final write up of the research.

Information obtained from the interviews formed the data for analysis. Direct quotations have been used verbatim and, where necessary, further clarifications have been inserted within quotations. For confidentiality reasons, only the name of the interviewee's agency are given. In some instances no identification is given as it is not considered important to the issue raised.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE CANTERBURY REGIONAL TOURISM STRATEGY - THE PARTICIPANTS

This chapter discusses the process utilised to form the Strategy from the perspective of the organisers (CTC, consultants and Airport Company). It identifies the factors influencing the participation process adopted and the reasons for the preparation of the Strategy. It also identifies the interests that took part and those groups that chose not to participate. In summary the perceptions of the consultants in relation to the approach adopted are identified.

5.1 Constraints

Resource constraints in terms of finance and time available influenced the manner in which the public participation process took place. An initial contract was established between the three main players, the consultants, the CTC and the Airport Company establishing payment, funding and an expected time frame. Consequently, the contract exceeded its initial boundary in terms of time and the level of funding allotted (Wilke, A. pers. comm. 1996).

Both consultants recognised budget and time factors as constraints to the public participation process adopted. Further limiting factors from the perspective of the consultants included the data available to prepare the Strategy and the resource constraints of the CTC in terms of staffing and timing.

5.2 Rationale For Public Participation

Both consultants have firm beliefs with regard to public participation in tourism planning, as indicated by the following comments:

"It has to be done in conjunction with the community" (Oelrichs, I. pers. comm. 1996)

and, *"Tourism strategies will only be successfully implemented if they have been prepared with considerable community consultation, particularly with the key*

stakeholders. They are the ones that are responsible for the Strategy's implementation and I believe that unless they have ownership of the process and outcomes it is doubtful whether the Strategy can be successfully implemented" (Calkin, J. pers. comm. 1996).

Such view points identify that both consultants recognise that there is a need for community input in tourism planning. However, several factors influenced the public participation process decided upon. The CTC felt that they should represent their constituents, that is members of the CTC. Some anxiety was expressed by the CTC with regard to opening the discussion to everyone. *"They [the CTC staff] felt that quite genuinely, wider participation may not have produced a better long term result"* (Oelrichs, I. pers. comm. 1996). Concern was also expressed in relation to the time factor of extensive public participation. The CTC and Airport Company wished to keep the development of the Strategy *"tighter and moving faster"*. This indicates that the CTC and Airport Company recognised that implementation of public participation can lengthen the decision making process as recognised by Thorn (1984). In light of such reasoning it was therefore decided that public bodies such as the City Council could represent the community (Oelrichs, I. pers. comm., 1996).

5.3 Selection of Participants

According to Oelrichs (1996) *"we sought as wide a representation as possible. We suggested a general structure [the public participation techniques to adopt and who might be included] and sought the comments of the bodies, for example CTC, councils, operators and district tourism operators* (Oelrichs, I. pers. comm. 1996).

The other consultant expresses a similar view, *"we were keen to ensure we consulted with as wide a cross section as possible, not just with industry operators but with government officials (national and local), industry associations and community groups. The selection of individuals was chosen in conjunction with the Canterbury Tourism Council* (Calkin, J. pers. comm. 1996).

The selection of participants closely portrays Jamal and Getz's (1994) approach to tourism planning of "collaboration". That is, public participation took part via a selection of key stakeholders with an interest in tourism in Canterbury. Participants included individuals from both the public and private sectors as discussed by Mill and Morrison (1985). Jamal

and Getz (1994) suggest that a wide variety of tourist interests should be included that constitute the "interrelated community tourism system". Jamal and Getz's (1994) view that community organisations should be included rather than just those from the tourism sector did not occur. All participants had some involvement or interest in tourism. The fact that participants were also residents did ensure some community input. However, whether or not this can be considered to be representative of the views of the wider community is debatable.

Consequently, participants that took part were all members of the CTC. However, participants were not selected necessarily because they were members of the CTC. They were selected because of their position within the community as well as the tourism industry and their perceived potential contribution (Wilke, A. pers. comm. 1996). Such an approach indicates a degree of bias with regard to who was selected. However, the extent to which public participation could occur was limited by the resource constraints of the CTC as identified previously.

In some respects the process of public participation as undertaken in the preparation of the Strategy can be thought of as evolutionary, as discussed by O'Riordan (1977). Although the approach adopted as explained above involved a general structure it was not strictly predetermined. It allowed for some degree of adaptation according to the situation. The process undertaken to enable community input is a reflection of the characteristics of the Canterbury area, the people and size of the region. A similar process of invited participants and the establishment of a consultative group had been utilised in previous planning activities undertaken by the consultants in Australia (Calkin, J. pers. comm. 1996).

The consultants recognised that the invited participants wore two "hats" involved as both representatives of specific interests as well as residents of the region. Hence, their values also reflect those of the local community.

5.4 The Non-Participants

Several interests invited to take part in the public participation process chose not to take part. They included Maori and the Federated Farmers Association. A discussion of the rationale for non-participation is provided below from the perspectives of both the non-participants as well as from the perspectives of the CTC and the consultants.

Maori

It was considered important by the consultants that input from the local Maori community be obtained. The CTC staff were however, to some extent hesitant to obtain Maori input. One consultant replied that the CTC appeared to be "nervous" about obtaining Maori input (Oelrich, I. pers. comm. 1996).

The consultants however, recognised that Maori should be involved while acknowledging that it may be difficult. As one consultant stated *"if they're not that enthusiastic, then how hard can you try?"* (Oelrichs, I. pers. comm. 1996). Such a comment perhaps indicates some degree of apathy by the staff organising the participation process. On several occasions when Maori were specifically invited to participate they failed to arrive. Several reasons were given by the consultants for this occurrence. These included a period of unfavourable weather when meeting with local Maori in Kaikoura, while on a further occasion a death within the local Maori community prevented involvement.

Staff of the CTC contacted the Ngai Tahu Trust Board specifically asking for their attendance at some of the meetings and workshops occurring in Christchurch. Most Maori trust boards are established based upon tribal territory and consist of individuals chosen to represent a particular tribe. The main purpose of a Maori trust board is to administer compensation funds received from land claims and ensure that it is utilised for projects of benefit to the tribe (Ministry For The Environment, 1991).

The representative of the Ngai Tahu Trust Board contacted revealed that insufficient time and staffing levels during the period they were asked to participate hindered their involvement. This therefore supports the claim by (Dahl, 1970, cited in Kathlene and Martin, 1991) that potential participants evaluate the time required of them and the importance of the issue from their perspective in determining whether or not they will become involved. The Ngai Tahu Trust Board is invited to take part in many strategies or plans, therefore it is necessary to determine which issues are given priority. At the time of the Strategy's preparation, the Ngai Tahu Trust Board was undergoing a period of internal restructuring. Although the Board is a member of the CTC and has occasional contact with the CTC, interaction tends to be greater with the Board's subsidiary, 'Whale Watch Kaikoura'. When asked whether or not participation would have occurred if the process had been organised perhaps in a more culturally appropriate manner the individual stated

that the invitation would still have been declined. Resource and timing issues prevented involvement.

In summary, both consultants felt that Maori involvement in the Strategy was marginal and would have liked greater input. However, it was an issue of contacting the right person. The consultants considered that the difficulties they faced could perhaps be faced when dealing with any indigenous culture. Both consultants indicated that from their understanding, tourism was not regarded as an important issue for South Island Maori. However, this comment is debatable considering the current level of land claims in the South Island and the potential tourism opportunities such land or monies could provide (Booth, K. pers. comm. 1996). Possibly, this indicates a lack of understanding by the Australian consultants of Maori issues.

Consequently, the issue of non-participation by Maori was raised as a matter of concern early during discussions by the consultative group. Further attempts were undertaken by the CTC to obtain Maori input. As one individual from the consultative group responded, *"I think they did all that they could, all you can do with these things is give people the opportunity. My understanding is that the CTC tried a number of times to invite and obtain that representation and I don't think they should be held responsible if those people chose not to participate"*.

Federated Farmers

A further non-participant in the Strategy's preparation was the Federated Farmers Association, a member of the CTC (Wilke, A. pers. comm. 1996). Communication with the individual initially contacted during the Strategy's preparation could not be established. However, a telephone call with a representative of Canterbury Federated Farmers provided some insight as to why the Association may have chosen not to participate. As described by the individual, *"we are a lean and mean organisation"*. The Association is funded by members only, therefore, it focuses predominantly upon issues of relevance to the majority of farmers. Its three main areas of interest include meat and wool, dairy and arable. According to Mulgan (1989) membership of Federated Farmers is voluntary and is at a level of about 30, 000. This figure accounts for 85 percent of those eligible to join.

The representative recognised that many farmers are involved in tourism replying "*they are forced to as an alternative.*" However, the state of farming at the time of the Strategy's preparation, particularly the prices obtained for meat and wool meant that the Association had more pressing matters that directly influenced a greater proportion of its members.

In light of the reasoning given by both of the non-participating interests it is clear that apathetic attitudes by non-participants as suggested by Sewell and Coppock (1977) and James (1991) were not predominant. Rather, issues of timing, resource constraints in terms of finance and staffing levels hindered involvement. Particularly, in the case of Federated Farmers it was a matter of focussing upon issues that affected the majority of its members. This supports the view of Sewell and Coppock (1977) that potential participants evaluate whether or not they are directly impacted upon by the issue. This was also the case for the Ngai Tahu Trust Board where it was a matter of giving priority to issues deemed as important. Cultural or racial inappropriateness as suggested by Arnstein (1969) did not prevent Maori from participating.

5.5 Advantages and Disadvantages of the Public Participation Process

In summary, both consultants identified the following factors as advantages of the public participation process adopted; strong local input, a partnership approach and interaction between key stakeholders. Such interaction ensured individuals therefore obtained a more in-depth understanding of each other's goals. Interestingly, both consultants perceived there to be no disadvantages in relation to the public participation process utilised. The CTC staff, however recognised that the approach adopted was "targeted". As the CTC staff member explained "*I make no apologies for that, we had to get something in place*" (Wilke, A. pers. comm, 1996). Further discussion of this issue is provided from the perspectives of the participants in the sections that follow.

CHAPTER SIX

MANAGEMENT OF THE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS

This chapter addresses the management of the public participation process used in the formation of the Strategy. It focuses upon how participants became involved, the type of public participation techniques used to obtain input and the operation of the techniques identified.

A formal written invitation was used as the main method of asking people to take part in the preparation of the Strategy. Of note is that two individuals expressed concern that they found out that a Strategy was in the process of preparation once it was well under way. This is indicated by the following comments from representatives of the Christchurch City Council and Department of Conservation respectively :

"It was quite interesting actually, because the councillors were involved and I found out about it and said hold on, that's something I should be involved in and so eventually it came through and it wasn't until it was a little way down the track, I suppose, maybe even the second meeting".

and,

"I wasn't involved right at the beginning. I was involved from an interest point of view. I didn't even know it was being formulated until I was told later on in the piece".

Both individuals commented that they would have liked greater input into the preparation of the Strategy. However, they did recognise that other participants from their agencies were involved and had had greater involvement. The individuals considered their late involvement to be an "in-house" issue rather than the responsibility of the CTC staff, or the consultants.

A variety of public participation techniques were utilised during the Strategy's preparation. Different techniques proved to be appropriate at different stages of the process as suggested by O'Riordan (1977), Switzer (1978) and Smith (1984). Such techniques included brainstorming, regional meetings early in the process, consultative group workshops, one-on-one meetings between the interest, CTC staff and the

consultants, workshops and discussion groups, an annual general meeting presenting the Strategy and reviewing of the drafts throughout the process. Some individuals were involved in several groups such as the consultative group, CTC Executive meetings and specific workshops. A variety of techniques ensured that the inadequacies of individual techniques were counteracted as discussed by O'Riordan (1977), Switzer (1978) and Smith (1984). One-on-one discussion with specific interests later in the process enabled the elicitation of direct information to the CTC staff and consultants as suggested by Sinclair (1986). The consultants were aware of the information they lacked, therefore direct contact was made with agencies such as the Department of Conservation and the Regional Council to obtain further details.

The public participation techniques employed in the preparation of the Strategy most closely meet with the **structured** component of Glass's (1979) typology. This level of the typology explains how participants are selected from specific community groups if the issue is of relevance to that group. Hence, individuals that took part in the Strategy's preparation were selected due to their 'interest' in the tourism sector of the Canterbury community. The techniques utilised did not allow for wider participation by the general public.

Participants took part in the process to varying levels ranging from one to six attendances at various meetings or workshops. Those with the highest level of involvement were a part of the consultative group and to some extent were "closer" to the document than other individuals. The majority of the meetings and workshops were held in a variety of central city locations apart from the earlier regional meetings.

Several individuals could not attend all meetings to which they were invited. The main reasons given for this occurrence were other work commitments. One individual representing the Department of Conservation explained that the main reason for their agreement to take part in the preparation of the Strategy was the fact that they were informed it would require only a few hours of their time. Furthermore, an individual representing the hospitality industry revealed that at the time she was asked to become involved it was one of the busiest periods of her life. Therefore, this constrained the level and extent to which she could become involved. Additionally, a participant from an outlying region explained that she had work commitments in the city other than the tourist interest she was selected to represent. Therefore she could not attend every meeting to

which she was invited. However, some meetings held during the lunch period enabled her attendance. Such comments support the discussion by Dahl (1970 cited in Kathlene and Martin, 1991) that participants evaluate the time or commitment required of them in determining whether or not they will become involved.

In recognition of the view of Switzer (1978) that it is useful to distribute written material prior to workshops or meetings, participants were asked whether they received any information in relation to what was expected of them or work to prepare beforehand. Most participants received some form of information before meetings. However, this was not the case for all participants, or for every specific public participation occasion with which individuals were involved. For the initial workshop held at the International Antarctic Centre an introductory letter was sent explaining its purpose. As the planning process progressed, considerable written material was generated in the form of drafts of the Strategy. Therefore, this supports the view of Keogh (1990) that information distribution should occur throughout the public participation process to ensure participants remain aware of progress. Most interviewees commented that adequate time was given to read, think about the information contained in drafts and prepare comments if necessary. Several negative comments were however, noted. As one participant from the hospitality industry explained:

"There's never enough time, with a 70 hour working week it's a matter of working out what one's priorities are"

and, *"there was a problem of not having enough time in advance. I would have liked a week or two's notice to be able to undertake the required reading"*.

An interviewee from the Department of Conservation recalled one instance when documentation was received only a few days prior to a meeting:

"That seems to be the way here, we get so many things dumped on us at short notice".

This view was also held by a representative of the attraction sector who recalled several occasions where limited notification was given prior to meetings. Specifically, she referred to the limited time available for reading the draft Strategy:

"I'm used to reading that much material, but that's not necessarily the case for a lot of the people that were involved with it".

Such comments identify that the public participation process involved considerable commitment in terms of time required for reading documentation. Sinclair (1986) discusses how if participants are aware of this factor initially they may be deterred from participating. However, in this instance participants did not become aware of what was required of them until later in the process.

One individual did however, indicate that the time commitment required of them could have been explained more explicitly at the beginning of the process. This is indicated by the following comment:

"to actually have had a complete time frame and an understanding of where we were going would've been quite helpful. An outline that said this is how many meetings, these are the months in which they are going to occur, this is almost the purpose of them, because they did change over time from early stages through to the end".

She further clarified this comment stating that such awareness would have enabled her to plan ahead and perhaps ensure she was adequately prepared prior to meetings.

Some individuals particularly "close" to the document, for example, the Airport Company, members of the Tourism Council Executive and several members of the consultative group recognised that they were on the "inside" as well, therefore they were fairly well aware of progress. Some interviewees mentioned that the Strategy was often discussed informally at social functions or during contact with the CTC for other matters and at social functions. This therefore indicates that participation did not always occur via a "managed" public participation process.

At a more practical level a variety of different room layouts were used during the public participation process. These included a theatre style layout, u-shape, around a conference table and one-on-one meetings with specific interests at their place of work. Such layout techniques were reviewed in the literature by Williams (1987). The more formal layout, the "theatre style", was appropriate for situations where a large number of participants

took part. This occurred at the initial Antarctic Centre workshop and at the presentation of the strategy. A conference table layout was more appropriate for smaller group discussions.

Information was presented at meetings using a variety of means. Examples included slides, overheads, a whiteboard, flip charts, drafts of the Strategy, speeches and informal discussion. More formal presentations such as the initial Antarctic Centre workshop made greater use of visual aids such as slides and overheads as suggested by Switzer (1978). Such means are useful to explain information in a clear and interesting manner when communicating with large audiences. Informal meetings between the consultants, CTC staff and specific interests tended to take the form of one-on-one discussion, therefore there was not the need for visual material or further aids.

Several participants criticised the launch of the Strategy suggesting it could be further improved. Such individuals felt that the Strategy was not clearly explained considering that some people were present that had not taken part in the public participation process. This therefore indicates that the presenter should have given greater attention to the nature of the audience.

CHAPTER SEVEN

OPPORTUNITY FOR PARTICIPATION

The following chapter discusses the opportunities provided during the public participation process to enable participants to make their views known. It discusses whether or not participants were able to put forward their views and the factor that prevented this. It also identifies discussion issues that arose and whether or not participants perceived their views were actually taken into account.

Positive comments arose regarding whether or not provision was ensured for participants to make known their views. Most replied that there was considerable opportunity for those who wished to put forward their views to do so. However, as one individual responded, it tends to be more an issue of personality types:

"I would have thought most people had a reasonable opportunity to have a say, a little depends, some people are very outward, confident, executives or quieter more reserved types".

Several participants raised the issue of familiarity with others who were present as indicated by the following comment:

"It was a relaxed enough forum, others were present that I knew well"

and size, *"a reasonable size of 20 to 30 odd, I would think everyone there had an opportunity to have a comment, it wasn't so big that you couldn't"*

This supports the claim of Sinclair (1986) that smaller groups enable greater opportunity for participants to make their views known.

One participant did however recollect:

"I don't recall that there was any great effort to try and get views of individual people other than introducing themselves and saying what their interest was and approach to the thing. It was very much a case of those who wanted to, not forcing".

A range of views were expressed regarding the time allocated to explanation of information versus discussion of the issues it raised. It is necessary to point out that individuals were involved in different parts of the public participation process, therefore to some extent this could account for differences in opinion. Most commented that any part of the public participation process they had taken part in was a mixture of both information and discussion. However, several individuals indicated that nearer the end of the planning process, it tended to be the consultants explaining to participants their findings, rather than facilitation of discussion. As one participant responded "*they were doing all the talking*". This is however fairly logical considering that the Strategy was near completion, therefore, one would expect that it should be more a matter of explaining the final outcome than gathering new information.

Given that discussion occurred as opposed to just explanation of information, the public participation process must closely meet with the "tokenism" category of Arnstein's (1969) ladder. Arnstein (1969) identifies the difficulties of "neatly" categorising public participation into distinct levels stating that overlap can occur. This is apparent in relation to the Strategy's preparation. The different public participation experiences in which individuals took part and the different stages of the process in which they were involved influenced whether or not individuals perceived that their input had any impact. In general, the public participation process provided opportunities that suggest a mixture of the placation and consultation levels as identified in Arnstein's (1969) ladder. This analysis is made assuming that the tourism interest can be termed the "public". The placation level is characterised by the decision maker retaining overriding power while the consultation level is about providing opportunity but not necessarily ensuring it is taken into account. The CTC staff and consultants still retained overriding power over what information could be included in the Strategy while although opportunity was provided for participants to take part in discussion there was no guarantee that it would actually be taken into account. An example of this is indicated in the following discussion.

One negative attitude by a representative of the hospitality industry was given specifically questioning whether or not what they had been involved with could in fact be termed discussion:

"I thought there was enough time for discussion. I just felt the proposal was already prepared and it was not therefore discussion. It was mainly there for fine tuning".

One participant representing the hospitality sector explained how they had made some strong comments in relation to a written draft of the Strategy they had received. Specifically, they questioned where and how the consultants obtained the information in the draft copy. They considered that this may have been why they were not asked to participate any further.

When asked whether conflict occurred during any of the public participation methods, individuals took part in, most participants agreed that conflict had not occurred. What had occurred, could perhaps be referred to as a difference of opinion rather than conflict. This is indicated by the following comment:

"There was some healthy debate over a few things, but really, not something I would call conflict".

An individual from the hospitality industry when asked whether or not conflict had occurred replied *"personally I don't think so, but I think silently yes"*. When asked to clarify this response they replied that some participants may not have agreed with the views of the consultants and did not bother to make their views known. Such a comment indicates a degree of apathy by these participants. They did not bother to make their views known despite disagreeing with the issue raised.

One example of a difference of opinion that consistently arose was the meaning of the garden city image of Christchurch. Some individuals expressed quite strong opinions in relation to the image and definition of the city.

A further example of a difference in opinion concerned the issue of local versus regional interests. As shown by the following comment *"there was a little bit of local parochialism coming through from time to time"*. In other words, some individuals representing district interests were concerned that although the plan had a regional focus, some issues that arose had little relevance to their districts.

The issue of conflict or difference of opinion is perhaps summed up by the following comment by a representative of the Airport Company:

"The sort of process it was can take into account or accommodate fairly disparate views as they all go together to make up the whole fabric of the process. It's not something where you've got to have absolute consensus. In the end, you start to get a prioritisation or weighting of the common elements of emphasis. In some respects, the more disparate, initially the better".

Participants often mentioned that the small group size, particularly, the consultative group and workshops enabled meaningful input. This supports the argument of Zube (1984) and Sinclair (1986) that small groups enable a direct flow of information between the participants and decision makers and exchange of ideas. Individual one-on-one meetings with specific interests, such as the Department of Conservation enabled contribution to a greater degree. Participants could make their views known directly to the consultants, thus supporting the view of Sinclair (1986) that direct insight can be obtained in to the views of the participants.

Several participants involved through their representation of public agencies, including the City Council, Regional Council and the Department of Conservation commented that tourism was not the main priority of their agencies. This therefore influence the extent to which they wished to become involved. This raises the view of Dahl (1970 cited in Kathlene and Martin, 1991) that individuals evaluate how much of an impact they think that they will have in determining the level and extent to which they should become involved. Specifically, a City Council representative that attended a workshop with tourism industry operators, explained how they were not particularly vocal on this occasion. The more vocal individuals tended to have a direct involvement with the tourism industry, such as tourism operators. The individual indicated that their lack of knowledge of the tourism industry limited the extent to which they could become involved.

There were obvious signs throughout the public participation process that views expressed by participants were taken into account. Such examples, included note taking by the consultants and often the project manager as well as listening and nodding by the

consultants. At the initial Antarctic Centre workshop the use of a whiteboard was employed.

Although the above means were mentioned, some interviewees questioned whether or not their views were taken into account, as shown by the following response:

"I don't think what I said was really taken into account in any serious, meaningful way. There were nods from the consultants that they understood what I was saying, but it may have been, it seemed, it was way too late for what I was saying to really change things significantly"

The individual did however, clarify their comment indicating that there may not have been the need to change the information in the Strategy about their government agency, the Department of Conservation. However, they did feel that there were a few instances where their agency could have had a higher profile in the Strategy. Furthermore, they revealed that they were in no position to be effectual as their involvement occurred very late in the process of the Strategy's preparation:

"Really things had progressed so far down the track, there was very little I could really do".

A range of methods were identified as to how participants were kept in touch with regard to what was happening with the Strategy. Examples include letters from the CTC, drafts of the Strategy and informal contact with the CTC staff regarding business related matters or at social functions. Such means were generally perceived as satisfactory as far as ensuring participants remained aware of the Strategy's progress. There were no strong positive comments in relation to complete awareness of what was happening at all times.

Some individuals considered that their level of awareness was rather vague. However, further questioning revealed that this was influenced by other factors. Several participants commented that their level of unawareness was constrained by their work schedules. Therefore, not every invitation could be accepted. An interesting view is portrayed via the following response of a City Council representative:

"There were periods where I didn't know what was going on, not that I particularly wanted to know what was going on. Obviously, we were just a part of the process, not core to it, so therefore I wouldn't expect to know what was going on".

Such a comment suggests this individual did not perceive their input as a representative of the City Council to be all that crucial to the overall preparation of the Strategy. This comment further supports the claim of Dahl (1970 cited in Kathlene and Martin, 1991) that participants evaluate the level of impact they think they will and how important the issue is from their perspective in determining their level of involvement.

CHAPTER EIGHT

SUCCESS OF THE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS

This chapter evaluates the success of the public participation process utilised in the preparation of the Strategy. It combines analysis of the advantages and disadvantages of the participation process from the perspectives of the participants with that reviewed in the literature.

Two perspectives were revealed in relation to the fact that the consultants were not citizens of New Zealand. Some participants felt that this factor ensured an ability to interpret New Zealand and the Canterbury region from an objective perspective. As one participant replied *"they're not tainted with the history of the area"*. In contrast, some participants indicated that they viewed the employment of "outside" consultants as a disadvantage as indicated by the following reply:

"I believe there's an importance to have a real feel for the marketplace. If you're wanting local ownership it's important to feel the thing and develop the rapport that exists in the market place. I believe we have some very good people here who could've done the job".

Despite this view most participants recognised the expertise of the consultants in terms of experience in preparing regional tourism strategies. Several participants commented upon the professionalism of the consultants, as revealed by one participant, *"their reputation and background installed confidence in the people"*.

Although previous discussion has revealed some discontent pertaining to the technicalities of the public participation process, most participants agreed that overall, the manner in which public participation was conducted could be thought of in a positive manner. The selection of individuals with an interest or focus within the tourism industry ensured most participants had some level of knowledge in relation to the tourism industry.

The implementation of brainstorming at the initial Antarctic Centre Workshop meant that some degree of consensus upon values, characteristics, and aspirations for the Canterbury

region were established early in the process. This ensured participants had the opportunity to provide input into drafts of the strategy, rather than the draft being already prepared and participants reacting to it very late in the process.

The formation of the small consultative group to comment upon and refine parts of the Strategy was considered by some participants as a benefit. Further small workshops enabled participants to make their views directly known to the decision maker.

Some debate was raised by participants in relation to whether or not members of the general public should have received the opportunity to take part in preparing a plan for the future of the tourism in Canterbury. This is indicated via the following response:

"Does Cadbury's consult the public about their business plan? I mean certainly from a customer point of view, they do customer surveys such as what sort of chocolate the people like. I'm not sure they are going to ask, "Joe Bloggs" how they should make chocolate, that's their business. There's a limit to how much public participation, I think should go on".

Such an opinion neglects to realise that as discussed by Murphy (1985) and Haywood (1988) it is the community that must live with both the negative and positive outcomes of tourism. Therefore it is pertinent that the community is involved in any decisions that influence its future.

In contrast a participant from the hospitality industry recognised the importance of involving the public in tourism planning:

"In an industry like tourism it's absolutely critical that the local community supports it and is happy with tourism, particularly in Canterbury. The lifestyle and the community is a part of what we see as being one of the advantages and selling points".

This reveals an understanding that it is the community, the people and its resources that are "sold" to tourists. If the community are not happy with the direction tourism is taking negative may develop ultimately influencing the success of tourism

One individual representing the top attractions of Christchurch raised the question:

"How do you get so many people involved in a workable way, that actually comes up with something that is workable and not just a result of a committee. Whilst you need to listen to the input of people, not all of that input is constructive or useful. There's a time and place for having to choose and filter through that".

A participant representing a district council explained that she considered that the preparation of the Strategy should be something that is left to the "experts." This view contrast directly with that put forward by Seeking (1980, cited in Murphy, 1985) that tourism planning should not be left to "experts" alone. However she did suggest that some input from the general public should be obtained. Drafts of the Strategy should be opened up for comment by the general public. She emphasised the need for the public to have something to respond to, as shown by the following comment:

"You need something to go on for a start, I feel, otherwise you are going around and around the whole time. I left it to the experts, as I felt that is what the Council [the district council she represented] would want me to do. I didn't feel that we should get too involved in it as a Council. Really, the Council funds the CTC. We give them funding and they promise they'll deliver certain things. We leave it to the experts".

Such a view point further supports the view of Dahl (1970 cited in Kathlene and Martin 1991) that individuals evaluate whether or not their expertise and knowledge will be of any use in determining the extent to which they decide to become involved.

Several further participants suggested that a survey could have been undertaken acting as a measure of the views of the Canterbury public in relation to tourism. As one individual representing the City Council replied, there was a need to:

"go to the public, call for submissions, particularly on the final Strategy. That process I would have been quite insistent upon. I think the whole process of communication and consultation is really important. In particular, involving the public who own the province, opposed to the operators alone".

Such a view recognises the community approach to tourism planning discussed by Murphy (1985), Simmons (1994) and Haywood (1988). Tourism is reliant upon the co-operation and goodwill of the residents. This can only be achieved by working with these people or at least giving them an opportunity to have some input into the planning process. It involves more than decision making by those working directly within the tourism industry.

CHAPTER NINE

CONCLUSION

The case study - "The Canterbury Regional Tourism Strategy" illustrates the difficulties of undertaking public participation in regional tourism planning. It is clear that the resourcing levels of the CTC in terms of staff, time and finance constrained the manner in which public participation occurred. The approach was a "collaborated" approach involving a selection of individuals considered to have an "interest" in tourism within the Canterbury region.

Such an approach presents both advantages and disadvantages. It enabled individuals with a stake in tourism, including operators, tourism boards, local authorities and government agencies the opportunity to share ideas and gain an understanding of each other's perspectives. The main weakness of the approach however, was the fact that no allowance was made for input by the wider community, the key component of the community tourism planning model. However, some recognition must be given to the fact those who did take part were also citizens of Canterbury.

At a more practical level, the case study identifies a variety of public participation techniques utilised throughout the planning process to obtain involvement from the selected participants. The establishment of a consultative group enabled meaningful input from those individuals that took part. The main criticism expressed in relation to the means by which involvement took place relate more to the issue of timing. Prior engagements by participants in terms of work commitments influenced the extent to which individuals could become involved.

A variety of views were expressed in relation to whether or not the process should have enabled wider public involvement. Those who considered it as unnecessary justified their decision with the recognition of the added time it would require and whether or not such input would be of any use. Several individuals considered that tourism planning is something that should be left to the experts. Those who favoured public involvement recognised the reliance of tourism on the resources of the community.

Analysis of the approach adopted reveals that the public participation process undertaken for the preparation of the Strategy does not meet with the key believe of the community tourism planning model. That is, the public must be included in the planning process as they must ultimately live with the outcomes of tourism, both positive and negative.

Some recognition must be given to the fact that the Canterbury Regional Tourism Strategy was not a compulsory plan. Therefore the fact that it was prepared must be given some credit. As with any tourism plan, its success now depends upon its implementation.

The case-study has revealed that the inclusion of the public in tourism planning is to some extent idealistic. The realities of the situation in terms of the time, finance, staff commitment required to undertake extensive public participation and the level to which individuals are prepared to provide input, constrain the extent to which public participation can occur.

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APPENDIX ONE - Copy of Letter

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Dear

My name is Karyn Lee and I am currently studying for a Bachelor of Resource Studies with Honours at Lincoln University. As part of this course I am preparing a dissertation on the Canterbury Regional Tourism Strategy. Specifically, I am focussing on the process of public participation in the formation of this document as well as that which has been set out in the implementation stage of the plan.

As part of my research I am contacting parties involved in preparing the strategy. Interviews are the primary form of data collection for my research and I hope to carry these out over the next few weeks. So far, I have met with Anton Wilke from the Canterbury Tourism Council and have been in touch with the Australian based consultants who prepared the plan.

At this stage my understanding of the strategy is that public participation was very much targeted, involving a series of meetings and later a focussed consultative group. I have received a list of the various people involved and your name was one of them. Hence, I would like to interview you to find out what your experience of the process was. Providing this is acceptable, I will be in contact with you in the next few days to arrange a suitable time. I look forward to meeting with you.

Yours sincerely

Karyn Lee

APPENDIX TWO - Interview Questions

- 1) Who did you represent in your involvement with the Canterbury Regional Tourism Strategy?
- 2) How were you approached to become involved in the preparation of the Strategy?
- 3) How many meetings/consultative group meetings/other participation techniques were you involved in?
- 4) Where were the meetings/ consultative forums held?
- 5) what time of the day were the meetings/ consultative forums held?
- 6) Operation of meetings and consultative group
 - a) was information regarding potential issues distributed beforehand? (if so, how, how much time beforehand? was this adequate time to think about things and prepare?)
 - b) who facilitated the meetings?
 - c) how long were the meeting(s)?
 - d) how was information presented (if at all?) eg: slides, speeches, overheads, information boards.
 - e) how was/were the room(s) set up? eg -semi circle, row of seats,
 - f) was provision made for each person to have a say, particularly at smaller consultative group meetings?
 - g) what proportion of time was allocated to information versus discussion?
 - h) did you feel that what you or others were saying was taken into account?
 - i) how much of a contribution did you make?
 - j) if you didn't contribute, why not?
 - k) if conflict arose, how was this dealt with?
- 6) Were you kept in touch regarding the progress throughout the preparation of the Strategy? (eg letters, drafts)
- 7) Were there any individuals or groups who you thought should have been at the meetings that were not?