

Harewood

Leeds, Yorkshire

A. WHAT?

Description: The origins of the present Harewood Estate date back to the 14th Century. The House was built in 1772 and is regarded as one of *'The Great Treasure Houses of England'*. It has a range of important State Rooms designed by Robert Adams and furnished by Thomas Chippendale. The House also contains an art collection of international significance including Renaissance Masters. As a result, Harewood is designated as a *'Museum with an outstanding collection'*.

The parkland setting was created in the 18th Century by 'Capability' Brown. This was later enhanced by Humphry Repton in the 19th Century. In the mid 19th Century the House and its setting was significantly altered creating the South Facing Terrace.

Over the past 30 years the current owners have continued to reinvent Harewood in order to secure a sustainable future for the Estate. The introduction of a range of attractions to complement the House and its parkland includes:

- The Bird Garden – a four-acre site between the stables and the Lake which opened in 1970 and contains 120 species of non-British birds whose future is threatened
- The original Adventure Playground was opened in 1970. It was replaced and enlarged in 1993 and subsequently further improved in 2000
- The Gardens, Woodland and Lakeside Walks
- The Terrace Gallery for Contemporary Art was originally opened in 1989 (it is located below the Library of the House and is accessed from the Terrace)
- The Courtyard is the service hub of the attraction with:
 - Café
 - Gift Shop
 - Courtyard Gallery (currently housing the BBC *'Walking with Dinosaurs'* exhibition)
 - Dinosaur Shop
 - Function Room
 - Toilets
- Boat trips on the Lake
- The All Saints Church
- The Spiral Meadow – an innovative environmental art installation
- The North Front Events Arena
- The Showfield Special Events Area
- Car parking

Location: Harewood is located midway between Leeds and Harrogate (seven miles from both centres) on the A61 in Yorkshire. It is ten miles east of Leeds/Bradford Airport and eight miles west of the A1/M1 link road. There

are regular bus services from both Leeds and Harrogate. The use of public transport is heavily promoted and incentivised¹ (see: www.traveline.org.uk).

Site Size: The Estate covers 8,000 acres but the core visitor attraction is contained on approximately 200 acres around the House, owned and managed by the Harewood House Trust. For special events the Estate rents additional land to the Trust.

Ownership: The 8,000 acre Estate is owned by David Lascelles, the Earl of Harewood, and the family still live in the House². The majority of the Estate continues to be managed for conservation, agricultural and forestry purposes. The House and approximately 200 acres are owned and managed by the Harewood House Trust. A further 800 acres are available to the Trust for public events. Harewood House is a charitable educational trust set up to maintain and develop Harewood, its collections and grounds for public benefit (Registered Charity No 517753). The Trust was established in 1992 as a vehicle for the avoidance of death duty and to secure a viable future that would ensure the long-term maintenance of the Estate.

Management: As a visitor attraction Harewood House and grounds has been open to the public for over 30 years. It was one of the original stately homes to recognise the potential of becoming a day visitor attraction. In the early 1990s its numbers had stabilised at around 115,000 – 120,000 per annum. The attraction is separate from the Harewood Estate.

There was little by way of product development or investment and no plans for the future.

The establishment of the Trust in 1992 and the creation of a new, professional executive has revitalised the product and grown numbers to 350,000 per annum.

The Trust consists of four family Trustees with five non-family members. The Trustees meet twice a year to provide strategy guidance and to ensure corporate compliance and that charitable objectives are met.

A Management Board representing the Trustees works closely and regularly with the CEO, Terence Suthers, to prepare and agree the strategy and its implementation.

The Trust has established a wholly-owned Trading Company to drive the commercial aspects (retail and catering) of the visitor attraction. This is a not-for-profits operation whose surplus is reinvested each year for the benefit of the Trust and its objectives.

The CEO is also the designated Director of Collections, as this is a registered museum. The CEO is supported by an Executive Team that, as at February 2004, had five divisions each with its own Head:

- Marketing and Development
- Visitor Services and Events
- Collections and Learning/Access
- Resources (Finance/Administration)
- Catering and Retail

The catering is currently undertaken in-house with corporate and event catering let on a concession basis to a well known Leeds-based restaurateur (Michael Gill). In this way Harewood benefits from the brand and quality established by Gill, whilst Gill benefits from the brand

¹ Cyclists are admitted half price so, too, visitors using public transport.

² The family pay the Trust a commercial rent for the use of the House.

reputation, location and setting of Harewood. The future of the catering is currently being discussed.

The management structure has also been reviewed based on a desire to involve line managers more closely in the process of setting targets, review and monitoring. It was felt that '*more voices needed to be heard*' in order to inject more pace in getting things done, encouraging innovation and creating a more open style of communication.

As a result, each Division now formally meets as a team every month whilst the Executive meets every other Monday. Within each Division there are operational teams which are encouraged to meet as and when necessary.

The catering, retail and events have now been brought within the remit of the Trading Company.

The Marketing and Development Division is headed by Jean Hunter who is a consultant and retained on a part-time basis. Significantly, the marketing shows a considerable amount of innovation and ways of capturing audience attention in novel, interesting ways.

Funding:

The primary sources of revenue income for the Trust are from visitor-related activities including the corporate lettings and events. The Trust has been successful in securing grant assistance from the Arts & Business Yorkshire Group, the Countryside Agency, English Heritage and the European Union for capital schemes. Sponsorship has been secured for particular educational programmes.

The Trust's Endowment is not performing, consequently there is increasing pressure on management to generate more revenue income. This has resulted in:

- (a) an HLF application to renovate the Stable Block to create a conference space that will allow more corporate/business events to take place;
- (b) the extension of the visit season into February and November;
- (c) a review of the catering provision;
- (d) expanding the sales of the Harewood Card.

In 2002 the total income generated from visitor activities amounted to £2.275 million, consisting of:

Admissions and events	1.275	(56%)
Retail	0.344	(15%)
Catering	0.589	(26%)
Guide books	0.041	(2%)
Other	0.026	(1%)
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Total	£2.275m	(100%)

Income from grants, sponsorship and other sources totalled £0.33 million, giving a total income from all sources of £2.6 million. Total resources expended on all Trust activities in 2002 totalled £3.29 million, of which management and administration accounted for £0.345 million or (10%).

Catchment:

The primary catchment responsible for 80% of demand is the 60-minute drive time which embraces large centres of urban population including York, Leeds, Sheffield, Huddersfield, Bradford, Hull, Wakefield and Castleford. The total resident population in this area is approximately 5 million, together with an estimated 3 million tourist overnight trips.

Visitors: Approximately 350,000 in 2003, compared to 320,000 in 2002.

Product Base: Stately home in an attractive parkland setting with gardens, adventure playground, woodland and lakeside walks, exhibitions and events supported by a strong catering and retail offer. Specialist educational programmes, lifelong learning activities and guided tours.

Events are a major feature of the Harewood product. The public events programme for 2004 clearly demonstrates (a) the importance of events to the attraction, (b) the balance that offers appeal to Harewood's different markets and (c) the scope to grow sales of the Harewood card whilst offering existing cardholders value.

In 2004 there are 29 advertised events over 51 days. The majority of these events (17) are included in the admission charge for access to the attraction and are free to Harewood cardholders. The remaining 11 events have a separate charge for which cardholders pay a discounted admission or ticket price.

The full public events programme, including smaller-scale activities that animate the attraction throughout the year, is promoted through (1) the information/site map leaflet given to every visitor, (2) specific 'flyers' for each event distributed throughout the core catchment area, (3) banners at the entrance, (4) cross-referral activity throughout the Estate – including posters at key locations (including public toilets) throughout the Estate. In addition, staff are good at 'selling' events and prompting visitors to return for an event or an exhibition.

The Terrace Gallery contemporary art space hosts its own programme of changing exhibitions under the banner of '*artatharewood*'. In 2004 there will be three installations.

Opening Hours:

Management is evolving the opening period year-on-year, thus moving towards year-round opening. Traditionally Harewood has been an Easter – September/October seasonal operation. Its 2004 opening hours reflect the more expansive approach:

Grounds	11 February – 14 November
House	17 March – 14 November
Winter Weekends	20 November – 12 December

Admissions: Harewood is a multi-faceted attraction with an appeal to a high level of repeat visitation from within the local catchment. As a result of both these factors, there is a complex tariff of admission charges which have to be carefully present on promotional literature and other media³. The tariff structure is further complicated by applying yield management to help stimulate demand during weekdays⁴ and in the shoulder season as well as stressing the importance of the family market⁵. Every Sunday and Bank Holiday are charged at premium rates. There are 48 different levels of charging as well as group rates and the Harewood Card.

There are two main categories of admission, (i) Freedom and (ii) Grounds, with varying combinations of access to the different facilities and attractions within Harewood:

- (i) Freedom (basically all);
- (ii) Freedom plus Walking with Dinosaurs (advance booking);

³ See: www.harewood.org. There is an information and booking hotline: 0113 218 1010.

⁴ Students are admitted free on Wednesdays.

⁵ A family is defined as two adults and up to three children or one adult and up to four children.

- (iii) Freedom plus Walking with Dinosaurs (on day purchase);
- (iv) Grounds only;
- (v) Grounds plus Walking with Dinosaurs (advance booking);
- (vi) Grounds plus Walking with Dinosaurs (on day purchase).

The premium rate for the Freedom ticket is (at 2004 rates) £11, whilst the basic grounds only non-premium rate is £7.25 (a range of £3.75 or 34%). A premium-priced family Freedom ticket is £33.50, whilst the basic grounds ticket is £30.50 (a range of £3.50 or 10%). This reflects the fact that, for the family, much of the appeal is in the grounds (Bird Garden, Adventure Playground and many outdoor events).

The Harewood Card is an admission and discount card. There are currently 10,000 sales representing 28,000 people, resulting in 100,000+ visits. Prices are:

Individual	£35
Couple	£60
Family	£90

This card allows multiple admissions during the year, free access to many events and discounts on events, catering and retail. This is a highly valued product and service that is regarded as a major success and important innovation (see later).

Staffing:

The move towards a longer opening season is placing increasing pressure on recruitment and forcing changes in the overall pattern of staffing. The traditional year-round team (currently 63 people) has been supported by the seasonal recruits (peaking at 50). As the opening has extended to February-November the need for seasonal staff has changed to a ten-month period. This takes seasonal employment away from the student market.

A ten-month season is also longer than many potential recruits want, wish or are able to work. As a result, the staffing plan is currently being renewed. In the meantime, Visitor Services is having to adopt innovative approaches to meet these challenges. These include:

- Enhanced hourly rates for seasonals;
- Recruitment of gap year students and mature people;
- Providing a bonus for completing a whole season (currently £1,000);
- Increasing use of volunteers.

The volunteer programme is described in 'People Development'.

B. WHY?

Mission statement:

The Trust's mission (set out more fully in its Memorandum and Articles of Association dated December 1989) is to:

Preserve for the public benefit Harewood House with its ancillary buildings, gardens, arboreta, woodlands and park;

Promote the study and appreciate of Harewood as a place of historic and cultural interest and natural beauty; to provide facilities for recreation and leisure time occupations;

Advance the education of the public in the arts and sciences.

Aims, objectives:

To achieve these goals, certain responsibilities, commitments and actions are implicit. These are:

- To maintain the 'core' historic buildings and gardens and to safeguard, document, conserve and interpret the collections;
- To provide a high quality service for all visitors, including those with disabilities;
- To develop exhibitions, educational programmes and publications which enhance the visitors' appreciation and understanding of Harewood and its collections;
- To encourage scholarly use of the collections;
- To provide events which are in sympathy with the inherent qualities of Harewood;
- To encourage corporate 'partnerships' through sponsorship and to seek other funds in support of the Trust's work.

Vision:

Strategy:

Main Influences/ers:

Chatsworth House is regarded as being the 'model' against which Harewood sets its operational standards.

Traditionally there was considered to be competition with Castle Howard due to their geographical locations, however, there is now more collaboration. This is also evident through membership of '*The Treasure Houses of England*' group. This group meets every six weeks to share benchmarking information as well as the discussion of matters of common interest.

C. WHEN?

Origins: See 'Product Description'.

Evolution: See 'Product Description'.

D. WHO?

Markets: This is an attraction that clearly knows what its core markets are and what they want and delivers accordingly. Harewood is a family-orientated attraction primarily serving local residents from within a 60-minute drive time. Its markets are loyal with a propensity for high levels of repeat business year-on-year.

There is a primary appeal for families with young children up to the age of ten years. Increasingly, the family unit is recognised as being grandparents with grandchildren and non-traditional family groups such as a single parent with a child and their friends. The ticketing combinations reflect the changes in this market.

There is now a priority on growing the family markets with older children (10-14 years). This will be tested through the introduction of events and temporary exhibitions.

Marketing: The appointment of a part-time Marketing Consultant to lead a small, full-time team is recognised by the Management at Harewood as breaking with tradition but is seen as a major success. The Consultant has introduced a disciplined and creative approach that has minimised the need for paid advertising and exploits the PR and press activity. Media partnerships and a rigorous process of developing media relations is very evident.

The Harewood Card provides the basis of a very strong customer relationship programme. This is founded upon regular, quality communications with a core, loyal group of customers peppered throughout the local area. The volunteer programme also creates a group of local 'ambassadors' permanently in the community extolling the benefits of Harewood and upcoming events.

A small but increasing number of international visitors (450) use the Great British Heritage Pass.

Events programming is developed jointly by the Marketing and Visitor Services Team to ensure the appropriate balance to appeal to Harewood's core as well as specialist markets.

There is an extensive use of 'flyers' to promote specific events as well as the wider programme of year-round activities. All public-facing literature is distributed by *Audience Yorkshire*, a specialist regional distribution agency. The agency's work is regularly monitored by Harewood to ensure compliance with their definition of their catchment.

Harewood works closely with local tourism operators, travel trade and journalists. There are frequent familiarisation visits and before every main event (e.g. opening of a new exhibition) there is a 'soft' opening for these guests.

With the opening of the 'Below Stairs' Exhibition collaboration has been agreed with Yorkshire Television to make a series of documentaries on this subject.

The website is easily found and easy to navigate. It contains a virtual tour and extensive information. There is cross-referral marketing as part of the Treasure Houses of England consortium.

Harewood is one of ten Treasure Houses of England (recognised as the finest historic houses in the country). The ten consist of the following plus Harewood:

- Beaulieu
- Blenheim Palace
- Castle Howard
- Chatsworth
- Leeds Castle
- Longleat
- Warwick Castle
- Wilton House
- Woburn Abbey

The development of shoulder season business involves an innovative range of activities and events and associated marketing. These include, for example, the 2004 temporary exhibition '*Walking with Dinosaurs*' based on the BBC TV series. This opened in February and is supported by a dedicated retail area and themed catering. The exhibition has generated significant PR, resulting in 17,500 visitors over an initial opening ten-day period. The Exhibition cost £68,000 to host (including a £16,000 hire charge).

E. HOW?

Results orientation:

The Trustees set the context within which the Executive Team formulate the annual targets. The Trust currently operates with an annual £250,000 deficit per annum. The predicted continuing poor performance of the Endowment Fund is placing increasing pressure on the Trading Company to generate profits. As a result, the Trustees have set the goal for the deficit to be erased by 2005/2006.

There is now a Joint Estate Forward Management Plan being prepared.

Customer focus:

A wide range of techniques are deployed to ensure constant rapport with guests. At its simplest all staff and volunteers are expected to engage with guests. The volunteers are also specifically located at places around the visitor attraction solely to be the interface with the guest – as in the Bird Garden and the Terrace Gallery. These informal contacts create intelligence about guests that are fed through to the weekly team meetings.

Guest comment cards are readily available throughout Harewood. The Visitor Services Division undertakes to answer every comment card (where the guest has added a contact address) within three days. All comment cards are analysed daily and actioned as necessary. Patterns that emerge from the comments are strategically reviewed by the Executive Team.

The Yorkshire Tourist Board is engaged to undertake an annual visitor survey thus providing an independent and objective view. In addition, Harewood Card holders are also surveyed each year.

Leadership:

The CEO is recognised as having an open style of management that encourages an inclusive approach with all team members contributing to the debate about the operation of Harewood. Regular team meetings and open discussion at all levels takes place. The CEO and the Executive Team are expected to be seen on the ground interacting with staff, volunteers and guests.

All Team Leaders are encouraged to adopt and apply this style of management throughout their teams. There is considerable evidence of this being implemented as all customer-facing staff are extremely approachable, knowledgeable and enthusiastic about the product.

Management by processes and facts:

People development and involvement:

A high priority is given to the recruitment, selection and training of all staff, including volunteers. Every member of staff at all levels has a 'buddy'. The 'buddies scheme' was introduced to:

- encourage discussion about ways to improve Harewood;
- develop understanding between people of their different roles, interaction between different departments and to engender respect for each other's work;
- create talking shops about new ideas, new ways of working;
- generate a feeling of community and to effect better communications across the Estate.

This is regarded as a 'people focused – people driven' organisation, not a process-driven body. 'Investors in People' has been the key to giving this philosophy a firm foundation with the manuals and systems necessary to achieve IIP providing the essential discipline that supports the approach.

Throughout each department staff are encouraged to develop a range of skills. The multi-skilling approach is particular well developed in the Visitor

Services and Events Department where all staff work a four days on/four days off rota system and are moved to different positions at different locations on every shift rota.

The volunteer programme at Harewood is an important component of the overall success of the attraction. It strengthens, extends and complements the paid team of employees and is organised in a way that exhibits considerable innovation. The approach to recruiting and managing the volunteer team results in a committed, loyal, professional cadre of skilled volunteers.

The '*Volunteer Team*' is recruited, trained and organised by the Volunteer Coordinator⁶. The work for volunteers is set within a range of 'projects'. The current projects are:

- (1) House Stewards to act as interpreters and information assistants in the state rooms, the Servants' Hall, Housekeeper's Room and 'Below Stairs';
- (2) Shuttle Drivers for the seven-seater shuttle 'buggies' for disabled visitors and for those arriving by public transport (over 3,500 arrived by this source in 2002, an increase of 30% on 2001);
- (3) Terrace Gallery Attendants to assist visitors in the contemporary art gallery, as well as looking after modest retail sales at this location (books and postcards);
- (4) The Garden 'Gang' to provide practical assistance to help maintain the main gardens and the Bird Garden;
- (5) Bird Garden Rangers to act as interpreters and assist visitors enjoy this special collection, as well as to engage visitors in discussion about conservation;
- (6) Education Helpers to assist with the educational visits and especially to keep a watching brief on the educational workshops;
- (7) Churchyard Researchers helping research and document the families buried in the Estate's Churchyard.

In return for their commitment volunteers receive their travel costs as well as a free Harewood Card providing access to events and discounts. The social benefits of being a volunteer are recognised as a strong motivation to join by both parties:

"Harewood is a nice addition to my life – I've met some lovely friends and really enjoy the experience".

Barbara Davies
Volunteer House Steward

The actual day worked and the time committed are flexible for all volunteers but are agreed by mutual consent. Training is always given on specialist areas of work, as well as generic matters such as customer relationships and history/heritage of Harewood.

Learning, innovation, improvement, agility:

The Executive Team is constantly searching for ways to improve quality and to find new products in order to meet the interests of the core markets and to develop the target new markets. At present there are plans to:

- (a) further develop the Courtyard area which will strengthen its role as the visitor hub of the attraction;

⁶ As at March 2004 this is Sarah Irwin-Davies (Tel: 0113 218 1039).

- (b) create a new visitor centre (information and interpretation) at Terrace Cottage;
- (c) develop a wider range of facilities throughout the Estate (this will be developed in the context of the Joint Forward Management Plan).

The Team recognises the need for innovation in all aspects of its work and has reorganised its *modus operandi* to effect further innovation and ease of decision making.

The Events Programme is used in innovative ways to:

- Attract new and provide stimulus for repeat visitation;
- Extend the season;
- Add value to the product;
- Cross sale other products such as the Harewood Card;
- Generate income.

The annual 'Noddy' Event attracts between 20,000 and 25,000 visitors over a May weekend each year. This is core family markets and results in the purchase of 250 Harewood Cards. The success of the events programme is resulting in greater budget allocation and a willingness to take more risk as a promoter of events rather than simply being the venue for events.

The Harewood Card is regarded by the Trust as a key area of innovation. It brings numerous benefits to the Trust:

- Up-front payment in the Spring, creating important cash flow;
- Allows a strong customer relationship to flourish with a high proportion of annual renewals;
- Creates a flexible means of stimulating out of season visits;
- Captures significant on-site spending – the 10,000 cardholders generate over 30% of on-site revenue from sales at the shop and café (£301,000) and 30% of all visits;
- Develops a strong loyal, local customer base (80% live within a 60-minute drive time).

Communications with cardholders is ongoing by the website and with a Spring and Autumn Newsletter. The database of members is now being developed for email marketing.

The introduction of a free shuttle 'bus' to link with public transport in the area is recognised as being both innovative and a practical solution to the needs of guests arriving by bus or by cycle. The scheme initiated as part of Transport 2000 is funded by the Countryside Agency. The fleet of electric powered golf buggy-type vehicles are driven by volunteers and now also double as people movers on event days and as transport for disabled visitors.

There are a number of other areas of innovation which are especially highlighted by Management:

- (a) Yield management in developing pricing and admissions policy;
- (b) The bonus system for staff;
- (c) The volunteer programme;
- (d) The multi-skilling of staff.

Partnerships: Partnerships for marketing have been developed with Leeds Rhinos RFC and Yorkshire County Cricket Club who use the Estate for special events and other activities. This creates access to new markets and the popularisation of Harewood. A number of event days are allocated to local charities.

A number of partnerships have also been developed to create additional benefits for Harewood Card members. This includes collaboration with the RSPB for free access to 'Red Kite Walks in Yorkshire' and discounts at a wide range of local visitor attractions.

Social and community responsibility:

The Trust has as its primary purpose realising the educational potential of Harewood for public benefit. A specialist educational service drives relatively small numbers but provides deep programmes that are at the core of the Trust's mission. The programme 'Open Minds' is designed to develop quality lifelong learning in specialist areas.

The parishioners of Harewood receive complimentary residents' passes. These are non-transferable and allow unlimited entry, including all events that do not have a gate-share fee with a third-party promoter. This is regarded as an important social and PR initiative that reinforces customer loyalty and community support.

In addition, the Estate has two free open days each year (Spring and Autumn) as a means of addressing social inclusion issues. There are, however, year-round programmes to allow visits from deprived communities in Leeds. For example, there are Summer Schools involving the Chapletown Community in Leeds, as well as schemes for special schools. These schemes are sponsored by Chiswell Associates, a local firm. This sponsorship also allows subsidised travel to schools from deprived wards throughout the area.

The Educational Programmes at Harewood for schools cover all areas of the curriculum from leisure and tourism, to art and design (see: www.harewood.org). The development of educational resources has been supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund. A new circuit for Key Stage 2 pupils entitled 'Life Processes and Living Things' has recently been introduced.

An innovative continual professional development programme for teachers – 'Time Out for Teachers' has also been launched.

The Education Department also includes Lifelong Learning activities.

Others:

F. SO WHAT?

Monitoring success:

The responsibility for monitoring the success of the attraction is the CEO. The CEO, together with the Executive Management Team, monitors financial and other operational targets on a weekly basis. All aspects relating to customer satisfaction are monitored on a daily basis.

Measurement of success:

There are three primary measures of success:

- (1) Developing and maintaining visitor attendances at 350,000.
- (2) Meeting the annual revenue targets which is the main driver for the customer focus of the enterprise and diversification of revenue sources. These targets are set by the Management Team.

The key factors leading to the annual achievement of success are:

- Investment in products to meet core market demand, i.e. Adventure Playground, Bird Garden, Events;
- Strong customer focus;
- Constant search to improve quality;
- Establishing a friendly, homely and creative place to work;
- Encouraging innovation.

(3) Winning awards. In the past these have included:

- Sandford Award for Heritage Education;
- Runner-up - English Tourism Council's Excellence Award for a Large (+100,000) Visitor Attraction in 2003;
- Winner - Website of the Year from Yorkshire Tourist Board 2003;
- Winner – Yorkshire in Bloom 2000;
- National Museum of the Year 1998 ('*The V & A of the North*').

Bibliography: Harewood House Trust, 2003 *Annual Report*

Harewood House Trust, 2004 *Organisational and Staffing Structure*

Harewood House Trust, undated *A Guide*

Various promotional literature:

Groups Information 2004

Harewood 2004

Welcome to Harewood 2004

Music at Harewood 2003/4

Join the Harewood Volunteer Team

Harewood Card Newsletter

Contacts: Elaine Speight⁷, Head of Visitor Services and Events

Website: www.harewood.org

⁷ Originally trained as a Nursery Nurse before joining Leeds Council in an administrative capacity. Became a member of the Leeds tourism promotion team before joining Harewood as Head of Visitor Services in 1997.