

The idea of a TIC at Great Ayton was mooted as early as January 1989 to replace a caravan set up on High Green which dispensed limited information.

A steering committee was set up consisting of the great and the good to oversee the establishment of a staff of volunteers under the auspices of Hambleton District Council, who would fund the project.

A suitable venue was found at the end of the car park to the east of the High Green where, a few years earlier, the old church known as the Tin Tabernacle had been demolished.

The TIC was officially opened on the first of June 1989 and Harold Stonehouse appointed Manager and Margaret Stonehouse as Secretary.

Since then many generations of volunteers, have supplied information, maps leaflets and souvenirs to thousands of villagers and visiting tourists from all over the British Isles. We especially welcome visitors from Australia, New Zealand and Canada who are following the Captain Cook Trail. We also have a faithful clientele of walkers and cyclists who make good use of our detailed maps, etc. - we haven't lost a walker yet! However, an average day sees us handing out our free leaflets - details of local amenities - accommodation in the area - bus and train times - eating places - children's events - dates of local Agricultural shows - and the various routes up to the Monument and Roseberry Topping.

In 2006 the government cut the tourism budget and most small centres had to become self sufficient, or close. A decision was taken to carry on, with financial support from the Parish Council for the first year, and since then our various fund raising events have kept us solvent to date, though we are always in need of more volunteers

Life at the TIC is never boring, as we have many colourful characters cross our threshold, such as the Swedish lady who was given permission to leave her bicycle until she finished her sightseeing, until it became clear that she meant for a whole year. She was soon referred to an accommodating farmer- another satisfied customer.

We also had a burglary - the intruders were disappointed with our very small cash float so they doused the office with the fire extinguisher. However, most of our customers are lovely people, who are grateful for the service and smiles they receive at Great Ayton Tourist Information Centre.