



Food & Drink Focus Group 16th July 2019 at 9.30am

Riviera International Conference Centre

1. Welcome, Apologies and Matters Arising

In attendance: Kelly Widley (Chair), Carolyn Custerson (ERBID), Gayle Bettesworth & Adele Farrell (Below Decks), Charlie (Cantina), Paul Feasey (Pier Point), Sarah Hemingway (ERBID), Anthony Jones (21 & Prestige), Anna Trant (Seafood FEAST), Jay (Yates).

Apologies: Dan Stone (Wetherspoons), Tamara Gray (Bistrot Pierre), Alex Foley (Guard House Café), Katy Hulstone & Simon Hulstone (Burridges & The Elephant), Annette (Hunts), Joe Marshall (Henrys), Dan Stone (Wetherspoons), Martyn (Babbacombe Inn), Pete (Bays Brewery), Ash (Curious Kitchen)

Kelly welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Seafood FEAST

Anna Trant provided an update.

Almost 50 events have been listed onto the ER site and another 20 event listings due. There will be 6 early morning tours of Brixham Fish Market. The signature event will be hosted at NT Greenway, a reinvention of Agatha's 80th birthday meal, created by Curious Kitchen. There is lots of variety for visitors.

More B&B owners are engaged this year. Below Decks reported that they have already received some bookings for their events.

Recent PR activity has resulted in 2 articles in Western Morning News; a double page spread in Devon Life Magazine, and features in Delicious, Coast and Manor Magazine. BBC Countryfile Magazine has recently requested images and interest from British Muslim Magazine through a collaboration with England's Coast. A photographer will be commissioned to take new unique shots for future PR use. Request to participating venues to take good quality images for the image bank.

ER Website blog content has been created. F&D partners will have received requests to co-host social media sites and are encouraged to use social media tags: #seafoodfeast and @theseafoodfeast, and add SeafoodFEAST logo to website homepages. There have been 680 click-throughs from the Facebook campaign. It is important to ask customers how they heard about the FEAST for post-event evaluation.

ERBID has ringfenced £20K for Year 3 of Seafood FEAST and will be seeking sponsors.

Window stickers, leaflets and posters are available for participating venues. Seafood FEAST bunting would also help to identify where events are taking place.

Pop-up outdoor seafood kitchens in the 3 towns (Torre Abbey Sands, Princess Pier and Breakwater Beach identified as new potential sites) would enhance presence and meet visitor expectations of marquees and chef demonstrations. ERVIC could manage ticket sales for these events.

Action: CC to discuss pop-up seafood kitchens with Kevin Mowat, Torbay Council.

3. Round Table Discussion – Q2 (Apr-Jun) trading, trends, issues, summer forecasts

Round table feedback showed that the weather continues to impact on F&D businesses. Easter business was slow for some, whilst May was good, with July looking to be in line with last year's activity. The cooler evenings have impacted upon night-time trade for some. There has been an increase in family business with good Saturday daytime trade. Offering dog-friendly venues and varied events programmes increases business. Paignton F&D businesses have reported that trade is down compared to previous year.

CC provided an overview:

2018 stats show that visitor numbers were down by 1%. During the first quarter the Beast of the East significantly impacted upon business and Visit England's predicted staycation uplift did not happen, possibly due to continued BREXIT uncertainty. Businesses pro-actively marketing continue to do well. There is a new trend for ultra-short breaks for one night.

May Bank Holiday 2020 has been moved to coincide with VE Day 75th anniversary, with May Day taking place on Friday 8th May (instead of Monday 11th). ERBID will invest £25k in ER Airshow 2020.

F&D partners are encouraged to complete the How's Business Survey, currently there is a very low response rate.

It was agreed that F&D pop-up meetings in other venues could increase engagement and membership of the group.

4. 2019 F&D Online and Offline Marketing Activity

Destination Guides; Cafés, Restaurants and Tearooms Guides; Pubs and Bars Guides have been produced and are displayed in ERVIC with reprints available. F&D partners are encouraged to display these, and ERVIC plastic display stands are available on request. There is an awareness that the F&D sector requires more offline activity. A direct mailout to locals will cost £25k, and this may be possible in 2020.

There has been lots of online activity including new ER blog articles featuring national awareness days such as: World Chocolate Day, World Gin Day, Beer Day Britain, National BBQ Week, National Cream Tea Day, UK Coffee Week. Traffic to the ER website is up

38% on last year, with 30% increase to F&D editorial pages. The website maintains a growing presence on Google with 1,500 editorial and content pages, however there are some F&D product pages that need more written copy, 600 words ideally. Thin content on the product pages can affect the entire site's Google ranking.

ER Instagram takeovers by local businesses such as Curious Kitchen and National Trust, is working well. F&D partners are reminded to use #EnglishRiviera in their social media postings so that ERBID can re-post to 50K followers.

Action: ERBID to develop top tips to assist businesses with writing copy for product pages.

5. 2020 Destination Marketing Plans/F&D expectations

The 2020 Destination Marketing plan is being developed, with the objective to attract new domestic visitors. The ITV and Waterloo adverts has resulted in a 115% uplift in website traffic.

The Destination Marketing Group is developing a theme for a new long-term campaign: *Rediscover the Riviera*, changing existing perceptions of the area and targeting 18-35yr working professionals looking for short breaks. This brand concept will be presented to the ERBID Board.

6. Events Update

F&D partners are reminded that events can be advertised on the ER website and leaflets displayed in ERVIC.

7. Tourism Awards

ERBID 2019 Tourism Awards ceremony will be held on 3rd October at Imperial Hotel. 72 entries have been received. The award categories are aligned to Visit England categories.

8. ERBID2 – 2021 Renewal

A renewal ballot will take place in Spring 2021, with the current BID end date of 31st December 2021. A new BID group has been created to meet other regional BIDS including IOW and Great Yarmouth.

There are several options for renewal:

- Tourism BID
- Tourism+ BID to include professional services (such as estate agents, solicitors, accountants, suppliers benefiting from ERBID's destination marketing activities)
- Combined Tourism & Retail BID, to double levy income generated. 2 ballots would take place and 2 BIDs could operate.

A survey regarding intention of 2021 vote will be sent out at the end of September 2019. F&D partners are urged to support the local promotion of ERBID2.

10. AOB

Awareness Days:

International Beer Day – 2nd August

Afternoon Tea Week – 12th to 18th August

National Prosecco Day - 13th August

National Burger day – 22nd August

British Food Fortnight – 21st September to 6th October, during Seafood FEAST. Use #LoveBritishFood tag

The next Night Time Economy meeting will take place on Monday 22nd July, 1.30pm at Living Coasts.

Current Bylaws are impacting upon licenses being issued for live music events on Torquay Harbourside. Below Decks is having ongoing discussions with Torquay Harbourmaster and the harbour authority to try to resolve this.

Action: KW to organise a F&D networking event after Seafood FEAST in October to engage new members to the focus group.

Kelly thanked partners for attending.

11. Dates of next meetings:

Tuesday 17th September

Tuesday 5th November