



## Accommodation Focus Group Meeting – Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> March 2019

Riviera International Conference Centre, Torquay 2pm

**Present:** Angie Wright (AW) Carolyn Custerson (CC) Nigel Makin (NM), Robbie Clymo (RC), Keith Hutchinson (KH), Stuart Lewton (SL), Debra Wilson (DW), Des, Nigel-Ede (NE) **Chair** - Anthony Payne-Neale (APN)

1. **Welcome** – CC introduced APN as new board director and chairman replacing Tony Smythe
2. **Apologies** - received from Jess Dowell, Leandra Goldberg, Vicky Pritchard-Davies
3. **Matters arising** - no matters arising.
4. **Previous minutes** - approved

### 5. Trends Update

Most businesses for Torquay reported that January, February and March are up on last year but Paignton and Brixham reporting a quieter time. Osborne apartments tried a new approach with a holiday package including the excursions by coach which was very successful. Brexit could be the cause of bookings being down and the weather was so bad last year. Some businesses are using OTA's and others are not. Bookings from April 1<sup>st</sup> looking much stronger.

More Group Tour Operators are introducing English Riviera and including local attractions/museums in their programmes. CC reminded members of the Group showcase on March 26<sup>th</sup> - 27<sup>th</sup>.

### 6. Destination Marketing

CC updated. Destination Guide - feedback positive, 90,000 printed. 50,000 been sent out nationally since Christmas. CC reported that every 2 years an evaluation survey is carried out. Destination Guide is returning £58 for every £1 invested and still popular with visitors and valued by businesses.

ITV Central 55+ advert is running for 4 weeks covering the West Midlands – Call to action to visit [www.englishriviera.co.uk](http://www.englishriviera.co.uk) Businesses can use footage on their own websites to promote the area.

Next main destination advertising is via a very large digital screen at Waterloo Station for two weeks before Easter. The advert will show the new aerial footage with focus on our beaches targeting the Summer Holidays. The cost is £50,000

In January a new Facebook campaign called Riviera Moments started which will run for 3 months targeting families with 12 x 30 second videos. Performing well. Budget £20,000

## **7. Website Performance and Online Bookings**

Traffic to the website is up YOY with continued investment in improving content and SEO performance to drive traffic to ERBID businesses. New ER Blogs are bringing more traffic to the website. Visit Bristol website sees 20% of their traffic from blogs.

**Action** – businesses encouraged to review their Product Pages and to refresh their content regularly

Businesses expectation around online booking discussed. CC highlighted that the website must not just be seen as an online booking platform, but as an inspiring platform to encourage new visitors to the area.

Further website developments identified as necessary to support self-catering online bookings and introduction of Supercontrol should help address this.

Family friendly searches have also been an issue and New Mind are looking into developing this functionality free of charge.

**Action** – CC to continue to apply pressure on New Mind to provide the functions we require

## **8. Food & Drink Marketing – New Café's Restaurants & Tearooms guide**

The EBID has produced a new Café, Restaurants & Tea room guide to promote the great choice of places to eat and to demonstrate benefits of the BID to F&D businesses paying the levy.

An A5 leaflet has also been produced to advertise the 2019 Seafood FEAST. Both will be available at the Tourism Exhibition for businesses to pick up to display at their establishments.

**Action** – AW to deliver to Café, Restaurants & Tea room guide to B&B's/Self-Catering businesses

## **9. Events Update**

The BID Company has started an Event Development Fund for the first time with a budget of £25,000 ring fenced. The key criteria is to attract increased overnight stays outside the 6-week summer holiday.

Fund spent so far - £25,000 – Torbay Air show, £5,000 BMAD and £3000 Brixham Pirates.

ERBID Company will conduct a Business Impact study to assess Return on Investment and future priorities and opportunities to support events.

## **10. Tourism Exhibition/Conference/AGM**

69 stands booked; Exhibition full – over 200 delegates registered, everyone encouraged to attend

## **11. New Tourism Awards**

The ERBID Company are starting their own awards with the Herald Express stopping theirs. The new Awards link up directly with the Devon, South West and England awards for the first time. Full details to be circulated to ERBID businesses and entry encouraged.

The Awards are being sponsored by Wollen Michelmore. The award ceremony will be held on October 3<sup>rd</sup>

## **12. Research, Monitoring & Evaluation**

January only saw 36 responses to the January How's Business Survey highlighting how many businesses were closed at this time.

**Action** – Plea from CC to fill in the How's Business Survey even if you are closed as this data is so important in monitoring, evaluating and benchmarking overall resort performance.

## **13. AOB**

### **Future of the BID**

CC updated on the status of the current BID which will end on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2021. A BID renewal team, made up of representatives of the ERBID board has been established an initial meeting held with Mosaic the ERBID consultant. Various options are available moving forwards and these are to be explored with an initial survey to be undertaken amongst ERBID businesses.

**Action** – To send out survey to all businesses to get their feedback on a new BID

### **Focus Group Representation**

The need for representation from the Holiday Park sector was once again highlighted.

**NEXT MEETING:** Riviera International Conference Centre on June 25<sup>th</sup> at 2pm.