

PRESS RELEASE

From: Brixham Tourism Partnership

Page 1 of 2

For Release: Immediate

Friday, March 26, 2010



A message from the Brixham Tourism Partnership

Recent events regarding the new Tourism Strategy in Brixham and the proposed closure of the Brixham Tourist Information Centre have received on one side some very vocal, indecisive and objectionable press, juxtaposed with positive thought on modernising and improving tourism through resort and destination marketing. This debate has been an excellent opportunity for residents, businesses and attractions to air their views about modernising Torbay's tourism service.

Brixham Tourism Partnership which represents many tourism related businesses, attractions and several accommodation providers would like to make our position clear with regard to the Turning the Tide for Tourism Strategy and the proposed revision and provision of Visitor Information Services in Brixham.

Brixham Tourism Partnership have studied the new Strategy headed by Carolyn Custerson and the Project Delivery Team for the new English Riviera Tourism Company. We have considered the various press articles and taken into account the concerns of residents locally and their apparent desire to use the TIC as expressed in the local petition signed by some 2000 residents. We have also noticed a large number of local private sector businesses embracing and supporting the new Strategy and its intention to spend much more money on Destination Marketing the resort which quite obviously includes Brixham. Statistics show that out of 3.3 million visitors to the English Riviera only 12.2% use the existing Tourist Information Services bay wide with only 6.1% using an actual counter service. These figures clearly show how the usage of Tourist Information Centres have dramatically changed over time and the usage by residents for non tourism related ticket purchases.

As a group we understand the importance of keeping a Visitor Information Service in Brixham, however we feel that the way in which it is provided at present does need to reflect modernisation and the actual needs of the visitor. We also feel that there is a clear divide between tourism and residential use and understand that any tourism budget must be spent on tourism. As a Tourism Partnership we find it difficult to support local resident use of a Visitor Information Service in the context of purchasing tickets to take them away from Brixham, it is hard to find a bearing on tourism and the local petition has unfortunately just proven this point quite clearly. After many a heated discussion and looking at all available information we feel that Brixham should continue to benefit from a slimmed down Visitor Information Centre open only on a seasonal basis serving the tourist, working in conjunction with the proposed visitor information hubs. This will increase the availability of information

and help target the service to the right market. Not only will this modernised approach service our town better, it will also release money to enable further destination marketing to help bring visitors to our town and resort. We feel this is the most important factor of all. The new English Riviera Tourism Company must spend more money on marketing the destination and reverse the trend of a resort in serious decline. Resident services could perhaps be available from other local council counters. If we work towards this type of proposal and goal we feel this to be a positive compromise which will support all sectors.

Although having given support to the groups trying to save the Brixham TIC office, which were mainly residents not traders and due to us being a trade organisation we feel we must support the new Tourism Strategy and the concept for which it is built. It is our wish to continue to work in partnership with the English Riviera Tourism Company and Brixham Town Council to do our best for Brixham. Should any Brixham business wish to join the Brixham Tourism Partnership or be part of the Brixham Map, you can do this by logging on to our website www.brixhamtourismpartnership.co.uk

Notes:

Brixham Tourism Partnerships aim is to co-ordinate, promote and improve tourism, events, experiences and facilities for the benefit of visitors and the community alike. Since the Partnership was formed in the autumn of 2007 a lot of work has been going on to put Brixham on the map literally.

Brixham is going through a period of change with regeneration programmes for both the Fishing Industry and the Town Centre but we are here to help to make any transition seamless and spread the word that Brixham is Open for Business as Usual

Brixham has so much to offer – and we want to sing its praises.

In the future we will be looking at ways in which to make visits to Brixham an even more enjoyable experience. The Group members are working together to come up with as many inviting packages as possible

Contact:
Gordon Gout Chairman
Tel. 01803 852195