
AGENDA

1. Attendance

Apologies: Chris Slack, Nigel Makin

Invited: David Giles, Brixham Town Council

Attendees: M Green, Chair
Matt Crabtree, Treasurer
E. Pippett, Tourism
Alex Foley, Hospitality
Lynne Peets, Membership
David Giles, Brixham Town Council

2. Meeting notes – agreed by all

3. Parking Update – Nigel to arrange a meeting with Martyn reference a list of any parking issues.

Response to email: Kevin Mowet confirmed that he is looking at the possibility of building a multistorey car park on the town centre car park.

David Giles pointed out that a multistorey car park on its own may well be at odds with town centre plan although the town plan did include parking.

4. Oxen Cove – Any matters arising

Possible plan to include provision for coach parking.

Public consultation in March.

Nature of tenants unknown at this time.

5. End of Year reports: All areas please

Hospitality

Hospitality remains an important part of Brixham's economy with 80 destinations to eat and drink (according to Tripadvisor). The town enjoys a reputation for excellent food and drink and the sector is very important for the local and tourist economy, and employs a lot of local people. However the Chamber of Commerce has relatively few hospitality members and we are actively seeking new members from hospitality businesses.

2017 was the first year of the Torbay-wide Business Improvement District, which invested over £600k during the year on a range of destination-marketing projects. The BID has 4 years left with the intention of boosting tourist numbers to Torbay. Local hospitality businesses contribute to this marketing scheme via a levy on their rateable value. As part of the BID, a marketing initiative “England’s Seafood Coast” has been developed and achieved some national funding. Fish market tours, online videos, translated coastal walks and visits for tour operators are among the outputs of this scheme, aimed to attract international visitors to the bay. In 2018 there will be a 2.5-week seafood festival, “England’s Seafood Feast”, and we have been heavily involved in encouraging local hospitality businesses to get involved in this festival, which will bring lots of foodie tourists to the area.

2017 was another year of cost increases across the hospitality industry, and with noticeable inflation in supplier costs in the last few months, this is likely to continue in 2018. The national living wage, auto-enrolment pensions, higher business rates and BID contributions are contributing to higher costs in what is generally a competitive industry with relatively low profit margins. Labour costs alone are increasing by around 35% over 5 years. It’s not yet clear how our local hospitality businesses will cope with these changes, but this is an industry-wide challenge.

As a Chamber throughout 2017 we have been regularly communicating with the town’s hospitality businesses (members and non-members) about upcoming industry-wide and more local changes, challenges and opportunities. We have championed the Seafood Feast and the opportunities this will bring for the town. During 2017 we intend to continue this communication channel and welcome more hospitality businesses into the Chamber membership. Our ambition is for Brixham to be known as the best ‘foodie’ destination in South Devon.

Alex Foley

Chair’s Report

Anything to add to this anyone?

Chairman’s End of Year Report, 2017 - 2018

Before I begin on our various initiatives, I would like to thank every member of the executive for their dedication and commitment to both the Chamber and the community of Brixham. Their contributions have been vital to the success of the Chamber this year and they have freely given of their time and expertise with no thought of personal reward. They have been a pleasure to work with and I am very proud to be associated with them.

I would also like to thank Pauline Neale, who, while not a member of the executive, has also been busy on both the Chamber’s, and the Community’s, behalf. She undertook the administration of the Business Show and is currently working on the Tidal Bell project. Well done Pauline.

Tourism Exhibition

Apart from our usual administration, the year started with members of the Executive Committee manning a Chamber Stand at the tourism exhibition on the 15th March, 2017, an activity that we have already booked to repeat at this year’s event. Our goal was, and remains, to increase footfall in Brixham by promoting it to as wide a market as possible. The stand was very busy with lots of compliments for Brixham, the Chamber, our new guide to Brixham and the markets. Generally it was a good exhibition overall but the new guide, which we have created, funded and widely distributed, attracted a lot of favourable attention. Over the season it proved to be a great hit with

tourists and we distributed 30,000 copies in accordance with our goal of attracting visitors to Brixham. Our thanks to Liz Pippett for her hard work and contributions in this, and other, areas.

Early Season Preparations

With the town preparing for the season, we lent our support to various projects, including financially contributing to the hanging of flower baskets in Middle Street, undertaken by Pride in Brixham. We enjoyed supporting this, especially as it helped to make the area look so bright and cheerful. We also awarded the prizes for our bunting initiative and were able to give Brixham Town Council more than enough bunting to make the town both colourful and interesting. This was a real community effort, with local residents, many voluntary groups, such as the WI, Pride in Brixham, Friends of Furzeham, Fairtrade and supporters of the lifeboat crew, getting involved. Our thanks in particular to Sandy Richards, from the Brixham Sewing Box, and Mary Constance, WI, whose kind contributions helped to ensure the success of the project. We saved the Town Council £1,000, which they were able to use on other community projects. The bunting, with each string accompanied by a unique piece of artwork, was a great success.

The pictures created by Brixham residents and used to decorate the bunting can still viewed online at <http://online.fliphtml5.com/fvzy/qppz/#p=1> .

In addition to these preparations, we again funded – and put up around the town – the new event boards and some new maps that we commissioned. As before, the Chamber paid for these in full. This coming year, we have saved money on these boards by designing them ourselves. They should be in place before the AGM.

We also designed and provided a map for the PirateFest guide, sponsoring the publication of the leaflets so that they could be distributed as and where necessary. This cost the chamber £1500. We also supported Brixfest with another £1,000.

During this time, we also lobbied Torbay Council and other bodies on issues ranging from urban regeneration to CCTV and parking, not to mention threats to green spaces and other issues as they arose. We also corresponded with, and gave support to, other Brixham organisations in their preparations for the coming season, along with several new businesses. My thanks in particular to Nigel Makin, who tirelessly corresponded, researched approaches by other town councils and attended meetings to the benefit of the Brixham community.

Our treasurer, Matt Crabtree, while keeping close track of our finances, also looked closely into governmental changes likely to impact upon Brixham businesses and made several presentations to members on these and other issues. Thank you Matt.

Alex Foley kept members informed on a number of issues, not least of which was the Seafood Coast initiative, and corresponded widely with people in his drive to ensure the success of this wonderful project. Behind the scenes he also undertook a number of tasks to help others on both the committee and beyond. Thank you Alex.

The Markets

Getting ready for the market season is always a costly affair, with licences and insurance to be arranged and paid for. However the market is a continuing success and achieves several aims for the chamber and, ultimately, for Brixham. These include providing an income – invaluable for

enabling us to support Brixham through various initiatives - and also helping trade in the town through increasing footfall. However they also provide a platform for starter businesses, with several market traders now owning and operating shops within the town.

This year, in addition to the Saturday and Sunday fortnightly markets, we continued to run the Wednesday market, matching this to a coach and flyer initiative designed to increase the number of coaches visiting Brixham. This made a big difference to the town on days when the ferries weren't running, helping to reduce an impact that might have otherwise proved even more negative.

My thanks to Chris Slack and Ian Didlick for their many contributions towards making the markets the success that they are.

Over the season, we lost a lot of market days to bad weather – the most in one year since the markets started – but by concentrating on providing best value for our members we were able to largely reduce the negative impact that this might have otherwise had. We may not have had anywhere near as much money to invest as normal but what we had we used to best advantage. Considering that our income reduced from £32,000 the year before (approximately, exact figures will be in the treasurer's report) to £18,000, we did the best that we could with the finances that we had available.

Business Show

Thanks to Pauline Neale, who voluntarily undertook the running and administration of this show on the Chamber's behalf, it was a great success. It was a wonderful example of what we can achieve in Brixham and demonstrates the variety of businesses that we have in the surrounding area. The showcase from BMW out the front with their cars was a really good addition.

Planning for next year has already started with Pauline announcing that she will be working with Scribble and Ink to promote the show next year to maximise the visitor attendance. We had lots of good feedback and have planned a date of 18th September 2018 for the show next year. This has been provisionally booked with the Berry Head Hotel.

Pauline did a terrific job of showcasing Brixham and the surrounding South Devon businesses. Next year we will have a plan to draw even more Brixham businesses into exhibiting.

A big thank you to Liz Pippet and Claire Talbot from Devon Chamber for their assistance on the day, which helped to ensure that everything ran smoothly.

Lights and Luminations

In addition to our cash donation, we helped to secure some sponsorship for the council to try and bring down some of their costs. Between their savings of £1,000 on the bunting, £600 on the tree and a cash donation of £250, we were, despite the reduced market income, able to provide some very tangible assistance.

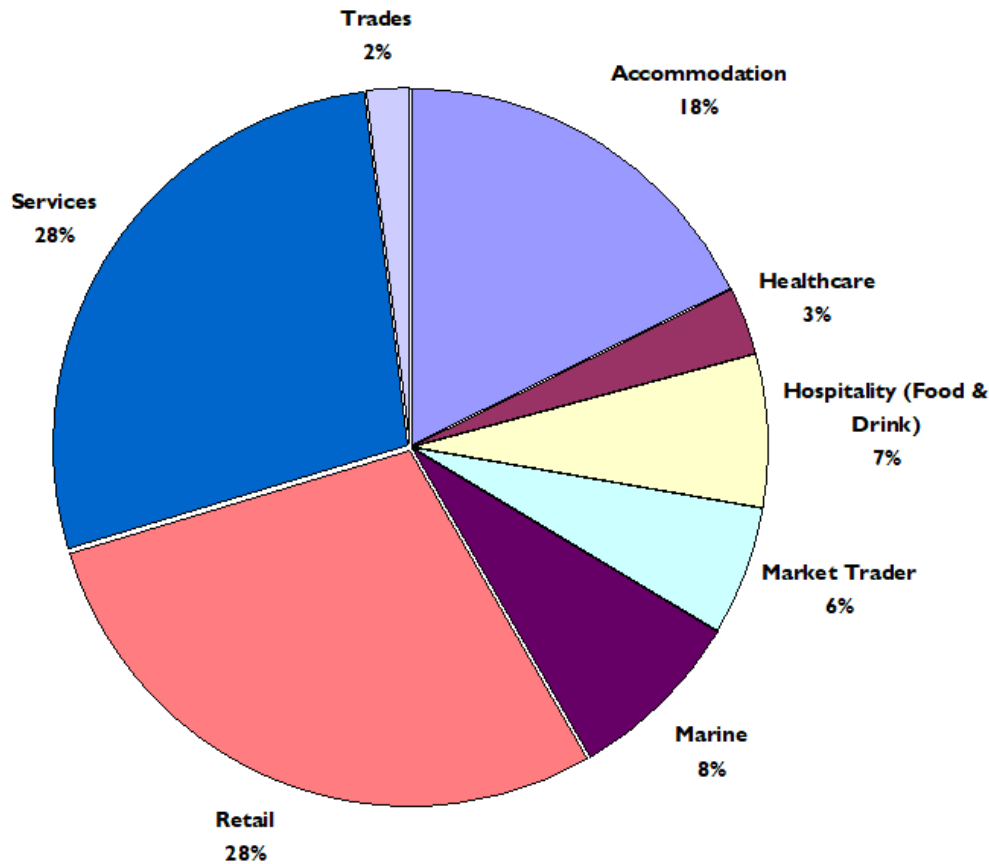
Membership

Over the course of the year, Lynne Peats has regularly corresponded with new and existing members, acting as a highly efficient liaison that has helped us to keep abreast of their ideas and

concerns. Thank you Lynne. The graph below shows our membership distribution in terms of trade sectors.

We finish the year with 112 members, which is very good considering the changes that we made in relation to the way in which we are now collecting memberships.

Membership Distribution



And now...

We finish the year in a flurry of considerable correspondence with, and lobbying of, Torbay Council and Harbour authorities regarding parking and the Oxen Cove development. We are also working on several other initiatives that will be of considerable benefit to Brixham. More on these to follow.

Martyn Green

Chairman, Brixham Chamber of Commerce

6. February General Meeting

- Mike Laukkanen and Jim Parker – Herald Express 2018 Business Awards

7. Any Other Business

Chamber Secretary

It is of the utmost importance that we have an official secretary for the chamber. We are going to actively encourage people to take the position. We need to put a prominent notice on the website, something on the lines of “Your Chamber Needs You” and include a description of secretary role.

Lynn and Alex to look through membership list and see if there is anyone that would be prepared to be secretary.

Brixham Chamber of Commerce

Secretary

Job Description

The role of secretary is an important one for the Chamber but, organised correctly, should not take up an excessive amount of time. Duties include:

1. Preparing agendas for monthly (except August) executive meetings, five general meetings and one Annual General Meeting.

(Not a huge task. The Chairman emails or telephones you to say what we need putting on the agenda for the meeting. You then pop the items into place on a template and email them to committee members and our website manager before the meeting takes place.)

2. Attending chamber meetings and taking minutes throughout or, in the case of potential absences, arranging with another committee member to record the minutes in your absence.

(Again, not a huge task. When you get home you just need to check them through to make sure they read okay and then you email copies to Committee members and our website manager for inclusion on the chamber website.)

3. Handling low level correspondence

(Usually pretty minor and sounds worse than it actually is. It basically includes getting rid of quite a lot of junk mail and forwarding anything important to the Chair. There may be a few simple replies to be made or invitations to be sent but, in the event of anything important, either the Chair will answer or you can pass the enquiry along to the relevant Chamber Executive.)

4. Taking the minutes for occasional meetings

(Something that happens very rarely. Once in a while, the Chair might ask you to attend a meeting with an outside agency and record what is said. It has only happened once in the last two years and has always been arranged at a time and place to suit all parties.)

5. Matters Arising

(Throughout the year, Executive members may plan and execute projects to the advantage of the Brixham community. The secretary may choose, on a purely voluntary basis, to get involved with some of these. If it's something that you are interested in and fancy developing further, well and good. If not, fine. Basically, it's up to you.)

Markets

Saturday market is well booked and Wednesday market does have interest but the Sunday market needs to increase the number of stalls and income. The Sunday market did cover costs last year so still worth doing but need to increase the size of the market.

We need to promote the markets. The new fliers look great but would be good to include more information to sell the markets. We could include a map on the back of the flier showing the markets.

Piratefest

MG: From comments made to both myself and Lynne, I think a few people have got their wires crossed over the Chamber's position in regard to Piratefest. I think that this is a pity because the Chamber has always been proud to support the Festival and looks forward to continuing to do so in the future.

Last year, we gave the Pirate Festival £1500.00 in April, which went towards last year's festival. When asked to donate a further £1450 at the end of the season for this year's festival, we were not, unfortunately, in a position to do so.

We told them that although so large a contribution seemed unlikely, given the fact that their festival is so early in the season, it is something that we would review nearer the time, when we would have a better idea as to the income that would then be coming in. We always intended to contribute something – in addition to the funds that we raised on our markets for them, which they received last year – but we would not be able to say how much until late April.

With fewer traders and a lot of markets cancelled because of bad weather, we had far less income last year than the year before. Our income reduced from £32,000 in 2016 to £18,000 (ish) in 2017. Hopefully this year will be better but we won't know that until the markets start in April.

However, on a more positive note, the chamber has, as we have for several years now, paid for the events boards in full, promoting both Piratefest and the other events on them on behalf of the people of Brixham. We have done this entirely at our own expense while committee members even gave up their own time to undertake all the art and design work themselves rather than use - and spend money on - the professional designers that have been used in the past.

It was agreed that a version of this should be put on the website and newsletter. Also suggested to send a copy to Tracey for the signal by March 1st.

The pirate festival is now going ahead - see press release - which the committee were very pleased to hear.

Website

We need to change the love Brixham Page on the chamber website, which is looking a bit old. Liz is going to put together some content in line with our plans for the website and send to Martyn and Mike.

Love Brixham Website

Martyn has organised some discussions and meetings with potential contributors regarding the Activity Index, which is still moving forward albeit much more slowly than hoped. We need to push people for copy to get information on website. Will bring this up again at the AGM.

Information from Brixham Town Council

Could this be included within our meetings. Agreed that this would be a good idea.

New information centre

David Giles advised that the new information point will be in the Museum from 01 March, 2018. There will be an interactive computer kiosk giving information on activities and attractions in Brixham. There will be a paid receptionist to give people advice.

Would be good to have this linked in some way to the love Brixham activity index when it is up and running.

Suggested also need leaflets.

Also need to be able to show that it is being used to attract advertising.

Suggested that they might want a stand at the tourism show.

Involving Brixham College in the Town

Town council have been asking students what shopping experience they would like. They mentioned brands like Primark and Poundland.

Could Chamber open dialogue with students to see what they want from our town?

Adison Tailford would be the person to contact.

Road works at Paignton Sainsburys

We need to clarify the scope of the works during the summer. Alex to follow up.

Date of next meetings:

Executive Meeting: Thursday, 8th March, 2018, Brixham Yacht Club, 6.00 pm – 8.00 pm

General Meeting: Tuesday, 27th February, 2018, The Berry Head Hotel, 7.00 pm – 9.15 pm