



BOURNEMOUTH & POOLE ATTRACTIONS

Bournemouth & Poole Management Board

Meeting Presentation

May 2018

OVERVIEW

The Bournemouth & Poole area have a wide range of natural attractions, visitor attractions & activities both inside and also outside of the conurbation which all contribute significantly to the tourism offer for the area.



NATURAL ATTRACTIONS

The primary resources of our natural attractions in the area are of a good quality in relation to our competition, these include:

- The 10 miles of excellent sandy beaches with blue flag status have some excellent visitor facilities including beach huts, café's, restaurants and sports facilities. With fantastic extensive coastal views of Poole Bay across Hengistbury Head, Isle of Wight and Old Harry from the cliff tops.
- Poole Harbour – the largest natural harbour in Europe (although we may shortly not be in Europe! 😊) It has significant importance for wildlife as well as being a major shipping channel for the working port and cross channel ferries. There is also an abundance of watersports activities, pleasure cruises and fishing.



VISITOR ATTRACTIONS

The visitor attractions in the conurbation vary in quality compared to our competition. We have a strong mix of indoor and outdoor attractions which gives a good range for visitors with different needs.

As well as attractions in Bournemouth & Poole other attractions across Dorset also play a major part as our tourism partners in bringing tourists to the area.

Swanage Railway being one of the out of town attractions that plays a significant role – they carried a total of 213,518 passengers during 2017– an increase of 2443 passengers or 1.2% on 2016.



ACTIVITIES

The primary activities in the area are of good quality in relation to our competition. These include excellent watersports and cruises, golf, walking, cycling & tennis.

- There is a huge variety of watersports available including sailing, windsurfing, kitesurfing, kayaking, surfing, paddle boarding and wakeboarding. These are an excellent resource although a relatively small market.
- Cruises only run from Poole Quay as Bournemouth Pier no longer has a boat service. Cruises include trips out to Brownsea Island, Harbour Tours, Trips to Swanage, Jurassic Coast Cruises as well as more exhilarating power boat rides. A noticeable change is the boat trips are becoming joined up with other forms of transport such as buses and trains – very important when going out to the trade market.



KEY ISSUES

The principal challenges facing attractions in our area are:

- **Staffing challenges** – we face challenges in relation to recruitment, engagement & retention due to the short summer season and relatively low wages paid by less competitive and profitable employers
- **Seasonality** – Tourists traditionally see coastal resorts as summer season destinations and changing the mind-set can take time. The shortness of the summer season can be a big problem for some attractions.
- **Weather** – The great British weather will always be a challenge to different attractions for different reasons – some attractions want fine sunny weather and other want rain and cold

KEY ISSUES CONT.

Planning – Poor planning for roadworks, developments and projects can have a huge impact on small businesses which only have a finite time to make enough money to see them through the winter season

School Holidays We are also concerned about the Isle of Wight going over to a different holiday for schools, they now have two weeks in October 5 weeks in summer, we think this should be resisted at all costs both here and nationally, two weeks in October does not make one week in the summer.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR GROWTH

International Visitors – This sector is very active at the moment looking for new places to visit as they now want to come outside the major cities and we need to be shouting about how amazing our area is and what we can offer

Activity / Active Breaks – People are looking more and more for ‘active experiences’ and will take these outside the normal peak season. People especially 50+ are still extremely active and have the money and time to be able to do these active breaks

Business Events – With the excellent conferencing and hotel base we have we could help to grow this market by offering a more joined up approach to our offer. Consumers deciding where to go even for business don’t just travel for the single purpose, they increasingly are looking at multi purpose / events in the area they choose

High profile sports teams, festivals and events are important - providing excellent information for staying and visiting, appropriate to the sector e.g Bournemouth 7s in attracting repeat visits from the under 35 segment, widely recognised as a gap in the market. More cross sector collaboration could be beneficial here.

COAST WITH THE MOST

The Coast with the Most branding is a brand that a lot of the attractions feel they can get behind.

Having a strong brand for the area to join it up is extremely important and there are a lot who feel strongly that this should be explored more.

The attractions group are more than willing to get behind this brand and will use it for the good of the area.



REDUCING SEASONALITY WITH TRADE

Travel Trade / GTO's – The travel trade and group travel market is huge and is there for the taking. Offering events and packages outside the traditional summer season benefits us all.

- The customer / tour operator usually gets more favourable rates
- The customer quite often gets a better experience as the places they visit are less crowded
- The attractions can extend there season enabling better staff retention and revenue outside the peak season



WORKING WITH THE TRADE

Different types of Travel Trade we should be looking to work with:

- **Online Travel Agents** – This sector continues to grow and dominate growth. With an increasing number of online operators coming into this market it's important to get the strategy right in this sector. API connection will play an important role in this development going forward but if managed manually can be quite time consuming
- **Education** – Many operators are looking for destinations outside London especially the Asian market so this should be pro-actively sold to get the coast into their minds now.
- **Coach / GTO** – These operators can play a big part in the off peak / winter mix. These can book direct or quite often go through wholesalers. Relationships with wholesalers are important as they could bring in big revenue once you have that relationship with them.

WORKING WITH TOUR OPERATORS

Inbound Operators

Large inbound operators are key and demand for regional products is growing in this area

Domestic Operators

These vary in size but include operators who concentrate on the FIT short break market.

Overseas Operators

Many overseas operators contract attractions directly so its important to have regular contact with these. Some do require foreign language information so if aiming for this market this should seriously be considered.

ENGLAND'S COAST – AN OPPORTUNITY

The England's Coast is a new project run by the NCTA and brings to life the wealth of experiences that can be enjoyed on England's coast for international visitors. It is focused on those travelling from Holland, France & Germany in the shoulder season.

- It's currently free due to funding (but may not stay this way)
- It gives the opportunity to boost out of season business
- Extra business without additional marketing spend
- Possibly cheaper than using OTA's

Get inspired – englandscoast.com

POOLE ATTRACTIONS GROUP

Now the Bournemouth & Poole Attractions Group!

We have been very active over the last 6 months attending lots of different travel trade shows representing the area both in the UK & Europe.

When we set up the attractions group 7 years ago I was very keen that attractions should stop being in competition with each other and look for opportunities to collaborate on their offers, working closely with tourism and accommodation to promote regional packages of product that aligns with what consumers are now looking for.



TRADE SHOWS WE ATTENDED

- **World Travel Market** – Good for overseas & wholesale contacts
- **Excursions** – mainly day visit market for probus / WI / retirement groups
- **GO Travel South** – mix of day visits & short breaks & mainly smaller group travel
- **Steve Reed Showcase** – good quality dedicated GTO's
- **Explore GB** - Fantastic inbound tour operators especially from America, Canada, Asia & Scandinavians
- **South West Group Show** – GTO's mainly for day visits
- **BTTS** – Mix of quality wholesalers / tour operators
- **CTA conference** – networking more than actual selling
- **Vakantiebeurs** - Good awareness of the area
- **Salon du Vacances** - Good awareness of the area
- **Group Leisure** – doing this one in October

AWARDS EVENINGS

Coach Tourism Awards

We have attended this over the past couple of years and Bournemouth was shortlisted as coach friendly destination this year



FAM TRIPS

We are trying to be really active in attracting good quality fam trips to the area and successfully did 2 last year showcasing what fantastic attractions in this area had to offer. We had fantastic coverage in a lot of the trade magazines – this has already resulted in bookings being made!

◆ Group Travel.

A "fossils, fish and chips" fam trip for 47 group travel organisers has featured some of the top attractions across Dorset.

The trip was arranged by Daish's Holidays with Steve Reed Tourism Ltd, in partnership with local tourism businesses such as City Cruises Poole, Lemur Leisure and Poole Tourism.



The GTOs were based at Prince Regent Hotel on the Weymouth seafront and visited Poole Museum and the Quayside Emporium, where the group watched a leather-making demonstration at Titan Leathercraft.

They took a fish-and-chips lunch cruise with City Cruises Poole, with views of Brownsea Island and Sandbanks.

Other visits during the fam trip included Athelhampton House and Gardens, a 15th century manor house near Tolpuddle; the Tank Museum in Bovington; and the Swanage Railway.

The GTOs also visited Kimmeridge Bay on the Jurassic Coast – which is famous for fossils – and went to the nearby Etches Collection, a museum created by fossil hunter and expert Steve Etches, who met the GTOs to talk about his visitor attraction.

Steve Reed, director of Steve Reed Tourism, said: "We were very pleased to have the support of the wonderful attractions – they really helped us to put together what was a tremendous set of tour ideas for the GTOs."

"The event was purely for group travel organisers and we can see that the itinerary they enjoyed will certainly help them plan and book their group tours."

stevereedtourism.co.uk

pooletourism.com

Published by: Travel GBI

WHAT'S NEXT

- Continue working on the trade shows and expanding our reach
- Improve itineraries and packages for the customers
- Look at new opportunities to incorporate our other attractions
- Add other events onto the calendar – eg Poole Boat Show – we will be the official information point this year
- Add more Fam trips especially for the inbound market as we need to get into their regional view before others do

Most of all - Continue joint working together and promoting the area for the good of all of us

QUESTIONS

