

## Totnes Notes 09th January 2014

### Introduction

This was an initial session with Hidden Britain to explore several key aims:

1. Build a clear picture of what Totnes as a destination needs from tourism
2. Develop the basis of a Totnes offer
3. Identify and begin to segment the key audiences
4. Begin to outline some tactics and activities to support the overall objectives
5. Encourage Totnes to start thinking of itself as a destination and taking a coordinated approach

In order to address these aims we asked a series of questions.

### 1. What do we want?

Our needs and desires in terms of what we want tourism to achieve in Totnes form a key part of the process in planning effective tourism development and ultimately shape the decision as to what activities we undertake. These objectives also are our check and balance against runaway market led development (i.e. we balance what visitors want against what we want to see happen).

These have been loosely grouped together under specific headings for ease of analysis

#### Economic Drivers

- To survive and revive as a rural market town
- Get more spend per vehicle /car journey-people stay longer but less congestion
- A thriving economy
- Higher visitor spend
- Higher footfall and spending
- Income to enable local businesses to invest in the unique fabric of the town
- Encourage more spend from the town and surrounding villages
- Local jobs for local people
- Healthy local shops for local people

- More vibrant market
- Opportunities for local young people
- Support to traders and more money in local economy

## Seasonality

- All year round steady numbers of visitors
- Longer visitor season
- Midweek visitors
- Develop a year round visitor economy

## Length of stay

- Longer stay car Parks
- More over-night visitors
- Encourage people to stay longer

## Visitor Experience

- A great welcome to people arriving
- More attention to litter in streets-daily/ twice weekly litter sweep
- Make the town centre more attractive so people want to stay longer
- visitor loyalty
- Improved welcome
- Signage and information at station
- You are here maps in car Parks
- More return visitors
- cleaner streets after market days
- Make it easier for people to visit

## Transport

- Cheaper car park charges
- Transport options
- Better modes of transport-park and ride
- Expanded public car Parks
- Traffic access
- Rethink residents parking permits
- Improved community transport in and out of town centre
- Public transport for surrounding villages

## Sustaining and improving the product

- Help in preserving the unique character of high street-keep businesses individual and not cloned
- Help in conserving and protecting historic buildings
- Higher profile for the arts
- Exploit our heritage
- Improve the Riverside
- Develop more water activities and river based businesses

## Awareness

- Publicise events more openly
- Attract the younger audience
- Raise awareness of Totnes to a wider audience
- Really showcase the experience

## Management

- Respect between market traders and council workers
- Improve communication between businesses-use TIC as the hub
- balancing the benefits and impacts
- Avoid the theme park, keep it real
- Operate within the existing environmental business and social capacity of the town
- Strengthen local pride

## 2. What do we have?

This section covers the actual product we have, the facts and embodiments we want to share with visitors as the best experience they can have here. They are also the key essence we want to tell the world about as positive motivators for a visit. This allows us to say “we are *(insert value or adjective,)* because we have....”

Tangible	Intangible
→ Diversity of independent shops	→ Transition town
→ Traditional food shops	→ Welcoming to foreigners
→ Markets	→ Eccentricity
→ Plenty of attractions-heritage	→ Civic pride
→ Rail and river link to Paignton	→ Sense of history
→ Dartmoor and the river Dart	→ Safe environment
→ Historic streetscape	→ Sense of community
→ Mainline rail connection	→ Musicality
→ Festivals-music, food, literature	→ Artistic
→ Language schools	→ Green agenda
→ The arts walking trail (Dartmouth to Totnes )	→ Conservative anarchy
→ For mainline rail station	→ Friendliness

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Vibrant high street</li> <li>→ Castle</li> <li>→ River</li> <li>→ Transition town</li> <li>→ Food growing projects</li> <li>→ Long marsh</li> <li>→ Independent traders, artisans, micro businesses, cottage industry</li> <li>→ Buskers and street performers</li> <li>→ Natural and complementary health practitioners</li> <li>→ Community gardens</li> <li>→ Ghost stories and hauntings</li> <li>→ Rare breeds farm</li> <li>→ South Devon railway</li> <li>→ The Narrows</li> <li>→ Guildhall</li> <li>→ Sharpham</li> <li>→ Dartington estate-historic buildings and wonderful landscape</li> <li>→ The market</li> <li>→ Community gardens</li> <li>→ Cafes, coffee shops</li> <li>→ A crossing place on the river and a focus</li> <li>→ Outdoor pursuits-river based, cycling, walking, running</li> <li>→ Alternative foods</li> <li>→ Bike hire</li> <li>→ Plenty of parking</li> <li>→ Good pubs</li> <li>→ Hire canoes</li> <li>→ Walks along the river, cycle paths along the river</li> <li>→ Two local museums</li> <li>→ Great place to make day trips from</li> <li>→ Lots of restaurants-mixture and choice</li> <li>→ Summer music school</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Community spirit and willingness to undertake action</li> <li>→ Quirkiness</li> <li>→ Diversity</li> <li>→ Artistic culture</li> <li>→ Reputation</li> <li>→ Subversive culture</li> <li>→ Having time for people</li> <li>→ Social interaction</li> <li>→ Level of service</li> <li>→ Creative free thinking</li> <li>→ Tolerance</li> <li>→ Radical</li> </ul>
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### 3. Who are our audiences?

So far all the efforts have been on what we think of ourselves, in effect defining the offer Totnes has, of course the other big element we need to balance this with, is who our visitors are and what they want and need. If we do not get this balance right then we risk either not attracting visitors or not reaching our objectives. Therefore a key step is to look at who we think wants to visit and as far as possible determine their characteristics / behaviour/motivation. Secondly we need to think about what we have to offer to engage them, and equally what we are perhaps missing.

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The key audiences and the relevant hooks and gaps for the Totnes offer are outlined as follows:

<b>Audience</b>	<b>Coach Day Trippers</b>
Characteristics	Older demographic (post family & mortgage) Travel as a group
Behaviours	Short stay (1 hour maximum) Tea and wee brigade Meander around and visit charity shops Seasonal
Wants & Needs	Need toilets and cafe's Easy and quick access to main sites

<b>Audience</b>	<b>Families</b>
Characteristics	Come during school holidays Travel as extended family groups
Behaviours	Seasonal Visit during wet weather
Wants & Needs	Looking for something to entertain and engage children Budget conscious

<b>Audience</b>	<b>Local Shoppers</b>
Characteristics	Generally middle-aged but can be any age Drawn from local area and Totnes itself Live in adjacent parishes
Behaviours	Very short stay (1.5 hrs) Park at Morrisons (weekly shop) Venture into town but generally visit 1 or 2 specific convenience shops only Little time for comparison shopping (browsing)
Wants & Needs	Easy and cheap parking Competitive offers Value

<b>Audience</b>	<b>Urbanites</b>
Characteristics	Based in larger urban centres Middle-aged couples Cosmopolitan Independents not mass market Middle class
Behaviours	Have disposable income Event and activity focus Likely to revisit if experience is good Day visitors or possibly long weekends

	Outdoor types-kayaking, walking, river activities
Wants & Needs	Like atmosphere of the town Broaden knowledge and try new experiences Something different from the norm Good quality food and shopping looking for independent shops

<b>Audience</b>	<b>International</b>
Characteristics	Students at language schools TTT, Schumacher, Dartington, Rosamund Pilcher, Australians, Dutch
Behaviours	Travel in camper vans Long stays with host families Parents visiting students
Wants & Needs	Information in own language Bespoke information Easy exchange of costs into own currency

<b>Audience</b>	<b>Older Couples</b>
Characteristics	Innovative not habitual Couples
Behaviours	Short stay Come year round Come midweek
Wants & Needs	Interested in heritage and culture Historical gourmet's with money Looking for activities and experiences to occupy their time Looking for places to go during wet weather and on Sundays Need to be enticed and made aware of the offer Car park pricing to encourage longer stays Park and ride More accommodation choice Information and interpretation on street looking for independent shops Diversity Relaxation Explore associated and surrounding destinations

## 4. What ideas do we have for action?

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This section identifies any specific tactics and actions we particularly want to see happen or consider vital to help achieve our objectives, showcase our assets and appeal to our audiences. They were prioritised based on importance and difficulty to deliver and grouped based on type of activity.

Quick Wins	Longer Term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Themed walking trail-linking the points of interest and buildings, gardens etc supported by a floor studs, leaflets and mobile app</li> <li>→ Totnes town centre at four smart phones-that all the town groups can feed into</li> <li>→ Arts festival</li> <li>→ Provision of camping-even if only seasonal around the Totnes show</li> <li>→ Extension to skate park and cafe for young people</li> <li>→ Youth centre at steaming key including accommodation, workshop, drying facilities</li> <li>→ Town farm</li> <li>→ Cleanup days in town centre</li> <li>→ More visibility of the activities at the pavilion</li> <li>→ Co-ordinate all historic venues into a visitor experience-by website and printed literature</li> <li>→ Create more educational experiences-maps and exhibits explaining the heritage culture and transition ideas</li> <li>→ Get river trip customers to stop in the town</li> <li>→ Development of more recreational activities on the river-kayaks, sightseeing trips</li> <li>→ Exhibition of ideas for the town by local groups</li> <li>→ Improved web links and mobile apps</li> <li>→ Backpacker type hostel or network of rooms in homes for return</li> <li>→ Better signage and street maps and town trails</li> <li>→ Indoor picnic area</li> <li>→ Improved signage and car Parks-directions to town, footsteps to shops insights, shop Lanes and where to go to buy a certain items</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Atmos project</li> <li>→ Holiday yurt village near the river</li> <li>→ Arts centre with cinema and gallery like the Wharf in Tavistock</li> <li>→ Additional bridges over the river for pedestrians from Steamer Quay</li> <li>→ Re-enactment of Norman Totnes</li> <li>→ Development of longer term car Parks at edge of town</li> <li>→ Monthly arts and crafts fair to coincide with monthly food market</li> <li>→ Park and ride scheme and community bus</li> <li>→ Investment in shared space throughout the town</li> <li>→ New bridges connecting bridge town and steamer quay with Totnes</li> <li>→ Improvements and route from station to town as a pedestrian-pleasant path way, good signage, plants treason,</li> <li>→ Improve accommodation options-campsite, budget hotel (all prices ranges)</li> <li>→ Rejuvenation of market and events e.g. Elizabethan market</li> <li>→ Interactive visitor website e.g. bookings, social media</li> <li>→ Rethink of residents' parking permits</li> </ul>
Back Burner	Low priority or drop
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Car free Sundays once a month in the high street link to of food market</li> <li>→ Steamer Quay redevelopment to provide Riverside activities and resources e.g. wine bar and restaurant</li> <li>→ River festival</li> <li>→ RE enlightenment at Dartington-camping,</li> </ul>	

affordable accommodation, college of arts → Add arts and artists courses to Totnes website as an umbrella identity	
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## 5. How can we put them into action?

This final section looks at a few specific actions and moves the next step of how we can realise them, by considering the resources and steps required to take them forward.

Idea	Arts Festival
How can we measure the impact?	Footfall in the middle of summer Interest and participation in artistic activities
Who needs to be involved?	Will need a mixture of amateurs and professionals, and organising committee, South Hams arts officer, Totnes traders, Totnes open studios group
First steps to get started?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Call a meeting between interested parties</li> <li>2. Form an organising committee</li> <li>3. Seek sponsorship and plan a date for events</li> </ol>

Idea	Camping
How can we measure the impact?	Can be measured by a number of pitches sold and occupied the year round Trial at Totnes agricultural show or combine with arts festival
Who needs to be involved?	Totnes show organisers TIC staff Local farmers and landowners
First steps to get started?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Talk to Totnes show organisers</li> <li>2. Ask TIC for info re: camping enquiries</li> <li>3. Source suitable locations e.g. Farmer's field with temporary compost hole, fire pit, and stand pipe</li> </ol>

Idea	Extension to Skate Park
How can we measure the impact?	Measured by a more facilities on site for skaters Number of young people using the facility
Who needs to be involved?	Devon County Council, South Hams District Council, Town Council and young people
First steps to get started?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Talk to young people about design</li> <li>2. Get finance organised,</li> <li>3. Build the site including shack for on site or</li> </ol>

	mobile kitchen, outdoor television screen, and parkour structures
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Idea	Improved Signage
How can we measure the impact?	Measure with surveys and visitor feedback Walk the routes to test out Mystery visits
Who needs to be involved?	Devon County Council, South Hams District Council, Town Council, volunteers and community groups
First steps to get started?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Find a volunteer team</li> <li>2. Signage audit</li> <li>3. Establish mystery visit schedule</li> </ol>

Idea	Improved web links and apps
How can we measure the impact?	Number of hits Number of times downloaded
Who needs to be involved?	Volunteers to gather information Professional designer
First steps to get started?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Secure town council support</li> <li>2. Find a project leader</li> <li>3. Organise co-ordination of information from the main sources</li> </ol>

Idea	Town Centre App and Trails
How can we measure the impact?	How many use the app How many leaflets go out How much referral businesses gained
Who needs to be involved?	TIC staff, preservation trust, traders, historical society, other local volunteers, professional designer
First steps to get started?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Get interested parties together</li> <li>2. Research similar apps and ideas elsewhere</li> <li>3. Draft a proposal to raise funding</li> </ol>

## 6. What do we do next?

By looking over the above we have taken some good steps into distilling the nature of the Totnes

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offer for visitors and identifying how we can better work to improve the contribution tourism makes to Totnes. The next steps are:

1. Hidden Britain to refine the above into a workable and justifiable action plan
2. Totnes Town Team to begin to think about how this could be delivered
3. Totnes Town Council to coordinate the approach

