

ENTERPRISING MINEHEAD

Edition 2 - January 2018

The Enterprising Minehead project has made some significant progress under its three main themes of People, Place and Business since the autumn. Under People, 'West Coast 360' (the new name for the Hospitality and Tourism Centre of Excellence) has been working with local jobseekers and has held an intensive fortnight of pre-employment training. Under the Place theme, most noticeably the seafront shelters have been repaired and given a face-lift in new lighter fresher colours. Under the Business theme, both the new branding for the town and the Business Improvement District's business plan are beginning to take shape with various consultations taking place throughout January. Further detail is included in this newsletter.

Enterprising Minehead is a partnership project run through the Coastal Communities Team, with Council officers heavily involved in its delivery. Thanks go out to all who are involved, whether members of the Team, members of partner organisations or members of the public / business community who are all contributing time to help make things happen and shape a better future for Minehead.

Cllr Roger Thomas
Chair, Coastal Communities Team

PLACE

Update on Coastal Community funded projects

Edwardian Shelter refurbishments are underway to the six shelters along the seafront. This includes replacement of rotten wood, cleaning and repairs to roof shingles and re-painting. The Coastal Community Team agreed the new blue and cream colour scheme that provides a welcome, fresh seaside look.

One of the conditions of the funding was to create an enterprise opportunity and planning has now been submitted for the work to start on the half-conversion of one of the shelters into a pop up shop. Trading from this area is expected to be

appropriate for craft stalls or perhaps seasonal deck chair hire. Invitations will go out in early 2018 to gauge interest.

Support for events: Minehead Events Group has secured 'Thundercats' ribbed boat racing for the August 2018 Summer Festival. A marketing campaign will start in the spring 2018.

A new summer Harbour Market is planned for the summer holidays in 2018.



Infrastructure and Public Realm

This element of the project focuses on the site between the eastern end of the promenade (Warren Road roundabout) to the central area of the seafront (next to Jubilee Café). A combination of hard and soft works, enhanced seating, lighting and play equipment are planned for this site. Landscape architects are soon to be appointed and it will be their job to ensure that there is coherence between all the different elements of the design. The design phase will take place during the first half of 2018. Design plans and stage drawings will be worked up through public consultation to the point of seeking planning consent. Look out for further updates and consultation dates as this project progresses.

Minehead Maritime Mile

Heritage interpretation trail, open air gallery with augmented reality and development of a new Minehead destination website (LEADER funded projects)

The Coastal Community Team recognised that the seafront required something to draw people along the mile length promenade, create cohesion by linking things already leading from it, and tempt visitors to venture all the way down to the harbour. The development of a new continuous waymarked heritage interpretation trail will include augmented reality triggers at several points along the way, link to a new destination website for Minehead and tie in to a central open air gallery. The trail and gallery will showcase images from Minehead Museum collections. Individually designed signs will celebrate different themes along the route and will be interactive so as to be engaging to appeal to a wide audience.

It was recognised that the area at the bottom of the Avenue could act as a central gateway to the seafront to immediately draw the eye of people that head toward the seafront down the Avenue as well as those coming out of the West Somerset Railway or Butlin's. Therefore this area will feature an outdoor gallery. This will be made of gabion baskets and is designed to be non-permanent. They are portable which is essential in this location which conceals a number of utility grids and an underground pump station.



The trail will have a core theme of 'find and follow the shells' to draw people along the route. There will also be a downloadable quiz to entice people to complete the trail. Once completed they can collect a prize from the visitor centre. It is also intended to link to existing features like the South West Coast Path and England Coast Path. The panels will be located at various points along the seafront and will contain an App with augmented reality/3D images and videos, aimed at creating additional interaction in a new innovative way. This feature technology will also link to a new Minehead destination website for visitors widening Minehead's appeal as a tourist destination.

Development of this tourist attractor showcasing narrative of Minehead's maritime history and heritage will be used to interpret and enhance the visitor offer. For a project of this nature it is difficult to quantify an actual number of new jobs that will be created in the short term following implementation. However, creating a new exciting feature along the seafront will attract more visitors, and we would expect an uplift of increased visitor numbers of up to 5%.

Frequently Asked Questions

As the project progresses, and through the various face-to-face consultations and media releases, interest in the Enterprising Minehead project is gathering pace. There has been particular interest in the 'Place' elements with questions raised directly as well as in the 'Twittersphere', all indicating that awareness of the project is growing. Listed below are some frequently asked questions about the project which we hope help explain why certain things can and cannot be achieved as part of Enterprising Minehead.

FAQS

Q: Why is the Council funding this project when it can't keep the toilets open? The funds for the activities included in Enterprising Minehead have been secured from outside funders for the specific elements of the project, namely the CIM fund, LEADER and Coastal Communities Fund. They are not Council funds and have to be spent on the purposes for which they were secured.

Q: Why can't we have bolder proposals? To put things into perspective, the total secured for the Enterprising Minehead project budget to date is £0.75m. However the amount secured to create a vibrant family-friendly seafront makes up £320k of this, which is a relatively modest amount for this type of scheme.

Q: How do the gabion baskets fit with the rest of the project? The Gabions will in fact form an outdoor gallery at a key visitor landing point (opposite the WSR station) providing information which links to a wider seafront trail.

Q: Can something else be put in this location instead? The underground services in this spot are particularly complicated, so the gabion basket design for the gallery is the perfect solution as they sit on top of the surface; No underground works are required. The rock design also links to the site's coastal location.

Toilets Following a number of queries about the provision of toilets in Minehead, something which Enterprising Minehead cannot fund, West Somerset Council has provided the following information:

Toilets in Minehead include Summerland Road, Blenheim Gardens, Warren Road (on the seafront near Butlin's) and the Jubilee Cafe. These are well distributed across the town and are all open to the public, although they are no longer directly run by West Somerset Council. Carousel toilets closed in 2015. There are no plans to re-open these.

Find out more

Enterprising Minehead is a partnership project run through the Minehead Coastal Communities Team. West Somerset Council is acting as the accountable body for funds which have been secured by the partnership to date. Further information about the background to the project as well as previous newsletter updates is hosted at www.westsomersetonline.gov.uk/Business/Regeneration-and-Development-Projects or by contacting one of the lead project officers Gordon Dwyer gdwyer@westsomerset.gov.uk (Business theme), Emily Wishart ewishart@westsomerset.gov.uk (People theme) or Nicki Maclean nmmaclean@westsomerset.gov.uk (Place theme).

PEOPLE

West Coast 360 - Centre of Excellence in Hospitality & Leisure

This activity focusses on upskilling existing and future employees to strengthen the offer of this key employment sector.

Throughout February over 1000 local children will take part in West Somerset's Junior Bake-off which aims to inspire children to learn a new skill. Heats will take place in six schools with pupils cooking in pairs. Winners will be invited to take part in a masterclass at WS College with head chefs from The Beach Hotel and Butlin's.

For those seeking current or future employment 'Recruitment Minehead' jobs and careers fair will take place on 22 February at The Beach Hotel. Work is also underway on developing 'Minehead Champions' and training programmes are being written which will form on-line quizzes and modules on customer service and knowledge of the local area. We expect to launch the Champions programme in late spring/early summer 2018.

West Coast 360 is also sponsoring the 'Eat Exmoor' Food and Drink Trade show at the Beach Hotel on 7th February. This aims to strengthen the local food offer of the hospitality sector by encouraging links with local food and drink producers.



BUSINESS

Business Improvement District (BID)

Consultation has taken place throughout the autumn and businesses in the defined BID area have been asked to put forward their suggestions as to what should be included in the plan. How to put the 'buzz' back into Minehead, Marketing and public realm are coming forward as the three underlying concerns. Respondees are keen to see a lively, vibrant atmosphere, and ensure the town is presented in tip-top condition. The steering group has been working on pulling together all comments to draw up a workable business plan which will be presented to businesses on Tues 30 January at Minehead Old Hospital (6pm).

www.mineheadbid.co.uk

The go-to place to find out more about the BID area, development of the business plan and latest news and updates

Next stages of the BID:

Jan 2017 - Present Draft Business Plan for comment (6pm at Old Hospital)

Feb - Mar 2018 - Present Final Business Plan and initiate ballot campaign

April 2018 - BID Ballot

New Branding for Minehead

Following the set up of the 'Minehead Marketing Team' work is underway on developing the new brand for the town. Key business stakeholders in Minehead have been involved in helping define the brand and draw up draft logos and associated materials which will be available for further comment at **drop-in consultations at the Minehead Eye café on Thurs 4 Jan from 9am to 1pm, Tues 9th Jan from 2pm to 6pm and Weds 10 Jan from 4pm to 7pm**. If you have an interest in promoting the town, its businesses and its activities we'd encourage you to come along and feed in your comments.

In addition to the branding, the 'Minehead Marketing Team' will also be working on a marketing strategy for the town, aiming to identify new target markets for 2018.