



Petersfield

“ Far more than a picturesque market towns, scratch the surface and Petersfield reveals a real cosmopolitan charm and the warmest welcome. So whether you bring your walking boots, shopping bags or a taste for great food, the heart of the South Downs won't disappoint you. ”



Need for the Project

Petersfield as a Market Town conducted a Healthcheck in 2006. This process of consultation with residents, businesses and other stakeholders highlighted just how key tourism and visitor spend is to the wellbeing of the economy of the town, and identified a real need to improve the Petersfield offer. In addition, the consultation showed there was a real need to ensure Petersfield was positioned to take best advantage of the formation of the South Downs National Park.

HBSE was invited to come and work with the Petersfield Town Partnership to audit the current provision and develop a tourism strategy for Petersfield. The key themes identified were:

- Improving the existing visitor experience
- Improving the provision of information
- Need for a clear message

Key Facts	
County:	Hampshire
District:	East Hampshire
Population:	13300
Project Started:	2008



The Process

The Process began with an audit of existing provision and a mystery visitor study undertaken by HBSE, who then drafted some initial recommendations.

However, to ensure the strategy had local buy-in and ownership, a working

group of the Petersfield Town Partnership was set up to take the project forward. Over several weeks HBSE led an action planning process with the group, working through the existing research, the audit findings and any other information available in order to identify the relative key issues, strengths and weaknesses of Petersfield, and through this pull together a list of achievable actions that could make some real difference.

Sub groups were assigned for each key area to explore means and methods of delivering each project. These groups undertook additional audits on current information provision, signage, provision and quality of mapping throughout the town, using these to develop specifications for each project as well as comprehensive costed action plans and budgets for the work, which allowed external funding to be sought for delivery.

In addition to the funded projects the group also approached the subject of branding and utilising local expertise, undertook wide public consultation in order to distil not only the message of what made Petersfield special, but also to get feedback on the visual components of the brand.

What is Hidden Britain South East?

Hidden Britain South East offers support to rural communities to help them uncover the fascinating wealth of landscape, history and culture within Britain's countryside. What's really special is that the local communities themselves, develop truly unique and distinctive experiences for people who visit their towns and villages.

Hidden Britain has been working in the South East since 2004 to encourage tourism at a locally managed level. The project aims to facilitate rural regeneration and community development where it is needed most. The project is funded by SEEDA through the Rural Development Programme for England.



Hidden Britain

Progress to date

Who is Involved?

The Hidden Britain group of the Petersfield Town Partnership has been managing and developing the project since day one, and although they have drawn in further support where necessary, it is this small group of able volunteers that have made things happen. Key members of the group are; Bob Ayer, Paul Molloy, Gareth Gammon, Penny Young, Tony Shaw, Tony Struthers and Hilary Ayer.

The group has been supported throughout by Hidden Britain South East, but also with regular and valuable support from both Petersfield Town Council and East Hampshire District Council, as well as the South Downs Collabor8 Project.



Project Outputs

- ▶ The Petersfield brand and logo was developed to provide consistency in promoting the destination. The key messages were set down in a branding document made available to all stakeholders.
- ▶ Redesigned Map boards for key arrival points in the town, as well as replacing, resiting or providing new boards where needed.
- ▶ A new Petersfield promotional leaflet to draw in visitors to the town and area
- ▶ A new Petersfield website, providing the key visitor portal
- ▶ Tear off map pads
- ▶ A Visitor Survey to be conducted by local volunteers

Status of Funding

To date the group has achieved £17,933.00 in funding split between the East Hampshire District Council LABGI fund and Collabor8 Interegg IVB funding. This funding was achieved in February 2010 and all projects are currently underway and expected to complete by February 2011.

In addition to the paid for elements, the time and expertise needed for the branding and logo design work were provided free of charge by Navigate Design of Petersfield.





Project Achievements

► Businesses engaged (91)

The group have so far had little business engagement beyond the initial consultation, however as the projects come on stream more businesses will be involved. In addition the group are not charging businesses for any of the marketing opportunities created through the project to try and ensure fair inclusion for all.



► No. of volunteers involved (est. 10)

The majority of group members have volunteered their time and efforts at some point in the process, not only in key decision making but also in the action planning process and in various sub groups actively delivering the projects.

► Skills & training accessed

Whilst no formal training has been arranged as part of the project, volunteers have gained skills and experience in various areas, most particularly in; obtaining funding, project planning, project management, commissioning and working with designers and printers, undertaking audits and research, branding and marketing.

► Marketing support provided
HBSE has assisted Petersfield in development of content for Ruralways and several other destination websites, both regionally and nationally.



Hidden Britain Input

It was Hidden Britain's previous work in Edenbridge and the Eden Valley that facilitated the initial approach from East Hampshire District Council following a presentation at a South East Rural Towns Partnership Event. HBSE was invited to work with Petersfield Tomorrow to bring a similar Tourism Project to fruition in Petersfield.

HBSE initially compiled an audit and recommendations for the group, then led them through the action planning process, and at each stage provided key support and guidance. HBSE worked to identify potential funders and was instrumental in drawing the budget and costed action plan together, as well as brokering the details of the funding contracts.

Hidden Britain also assisted in putting together the branding guidelines and continues to take a supporting role as the projects get underway.



Petersfield

Going Forward

- ▶ The group are currently working on delivery of all the projects and hope to have several ready for public launch in the 2010 visitor season. Certainly the leaflet at least should be ready by 1st June, with the website, map boards and map pads following soon after.
- ▶ The Visitor Survey will be undertaken over the summer months with data ready for analysis and final reporting by the end of the year.
- ▶ Petersfield Tomorrow as wider group are also looking at building on the success of the Greening Campaign and developing a project to look at how the town can adapt to Climate Change.



“ *Hidden Britain has worked very hard to motivate and guide and ensured quality work and outcomes. It is very unlikely that the achievements would have been made without their commitment, experience, motivation and guidance.* ”

Bob Ayer, Chairman
Petersfield Tomorrow

This case study forms part of a series evaluating the impacts and benefits of the Hidden Britain South East Project across the region. The Project is managed by the South East Rural Community Councils (SERCC) in partnership with Tourism South East. The Hidden Britain South East Project is funded by SEEDA through the Rural Development Programme for England

Lessons Learned

- ▶ Although an initial plan can lead to quick turnarounds on projects, it is well worth undertaking a full action planning process and identifying a whole raft of potential actions. Not all need to be done now but they can help you plan a strategy beyond the initial project.
- ▶ Firm support and assistance from your local authority can make a big difference
- ▶ Delegating tasks to specific sub groups is a good way to keep volunteers focussed on a particular issue.

▶ Often businesses may provide small services Pro Bono if they agree with and support your aims and objectives.

▶ The lag between planning and funding can be long, try and find something to keep momentum going in that gap. Research or branding exercises are ideal as they often require little funding to get off the ground and are also excellent for engaging the wider stakeholders and community.



Further Information
www.visitpetersfield.org.uk
www.hiddenbritainse.org.uk
www.sercc.org.uk
www.tourismse.com
www.seeda.co.uk/rdpe

