

Notes on Destination Chepstow

Hosted by Chepstow Chamber of Commerce & Tourism On Monday 2nd June 2014 at The Beaufort Hotel

Andrew Griffith President of the Chamber thanked those that had found the time to come along to the meeting. Andrew then asked Marc Le Peltier to introduce the speaker and lead the discussion afterwards.

Marc explained that although he had been living in Chepstow for some while he had only just become involved in businesses within the town. His background was in marketing and he was, as other business owners, keen to promote Chepstow.

He welcomed Chris Carpenter from Stills Branding, who was to give the presentation on Place Branding, along with Steve Sulley, Director of Stills, who was shortly to become President of South Wales Chamber of Commerce.

Chris agreed to provide The Chamber with a copy of the presentation which would be circulated to all those present at the meeting. The main message of the presentation was:

- That to Brand the town Chepstow needed 'One Big Idea' that everyone can understand and support.
- Define and understand what makes Chepstow different
- Decide how to communicate this effectively

Marc thanked Chris for his excellent presentation.

The meeting was then opened up to attendees for their comments.

Suggestions about what Chepstow Brand should be:

- Unique Location
- Races/ golf
- Theatre & Arts (the largest open air (undercover) theatre programme in Wales & bi-annual Arts Festival.

Other issues raised were:

- There was a problem with footfall. How do we get people to come here
- Poor variety of shops
- Business rates too high
- Landlords letting to the wrong sort of businesses
- Poor communication/consultation to retailers

Other comments were:

- that businesses need to get above the small issues and pull together
- good place to live but not to visit
- Globally the retail environment has changed out of all recognition,
- Chepstow needs a new story

Having listened to the discussion, Chris commented that Chepstow could stay as it is or everyone could get together as a positive group and grasp the opportunity to take Chepstow forward.

Marc asked that attendees send their ideas for 'One Big Idea' to the Chamber Secretary. These would then be collated at the next Marketing meeting when plans for a brainstorming session would be made. It was hoped all attendees would be able to attend the Brainstorming session along with other businesses and retailers that were unable to attend this evening.

Andrew Griffith thanked those present for coming along to the meeting and sharing their views. He urged them, if not already members, to join the Chamber so the Chamber could represent their views also.

The next Chamber meeting would be on Thursday 7th July. Mike Lewis has invited the Chamber to visit Raglan House (the old British Legion) which he is refurbishing to become an International Backpackers Hostel. The building includes a 12th Century Moot Hall, newly discovered vaulted cellar, and exceptional views across the Town and the River. The tour starts at 6 pm. and lasts about 45-60 minutes.

The Chamber is having an Informal Meal at 7 pm. at the Beaufort Hotel afterwards. Non-members were welcome to come along. The Menu and booking forms were available at the meeting