



## **Report from the IDTA Business and Tourism Networking Event held Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> October**

Thank you everyone that attended our recent business and tourism event, it was good to see so many of you there to hear exciting plans which will enhance the future of our town.

Here is a summary from each speaker for your information:

### **Ilfracombe Seafront Masterplan - Speaker - Cllr Rod Donavan**

Rod explained the history behind the Public Consultation held in January 2020 and the proposals for the Seafront Regeneration as part of the Levelling Up for North Devon, which were submitted in July 2021 and awaiting decision\*. Download a copy of both documents here:

- [Public Consultation Results](#)
- [Seafront Regeneration Masterplan](#)

*\*Since the meeting the decision has been received and, sadly, Ilfracombe has not been successful. Click on the following link to read an interesting article from our MP Selaine Saxby who is still pursuing this with Government [Selaine Saxby Article](#)*

### **Harbour Regeneration – Speaker - Capt. Georgina Carlo-Paat MBE, Harbour Master**

Relocation of the Old Toll Booths from the Pier to Victoria Pleasure Grounds - The completion of this project is expected to be by end of March 2022 which will see the Pier entrance to the carpark being widened to allow 2 way traffic, a designated pedestrian walkway installed and, once built, a welcoming archway in place of the toll booths on the Pier side. The relocated historical parts will form a central part of the new kiosks to be built on VPG which can be purposed as a café with tables and chairs outside, use for the Crazy Golf site and will incorporate a bus shelter. Additional public toilets have been planned and these are included in the Levelling Up Bid currently in progress.

Cruise Ships - We have 4 Cruise calls booked in for 2022. I would like to be able to offer the Officers and Crew a 'package' of fun things to do in and around Ilfracombe which will hopefully encourage the vessels to stop here and entice more cruise ships to book in. What I didn't say but might be worth mentioning is that the crew don't get a lot of time off in ports so don't want to travel far and like to maximise their shore leave, they also have money to spend, especially on souvenirs.

**Training** - With the Watersports Centre currently being built we have expanded the training room which will enable more courses to be run. I am in the process of gaining RYA recognition as a training centre and look to offer a full range of theory courses and further down the line practical courses. I will initially be using the waiting room on the Pier until the Watersports is completed, working with the Artists to accommodate both. I am also looking to join up with an RYA school in Torbay to help provide the practical courses in the meantime.



*Image of proposed Watersports centre*

I would like to be able to offer students who want to train here a full package, that is mainly a selection of accommodation to suit their needs. So if you book a course you can book accommodation at the same time. Once recognised we will be on the RYA website and this could well lead to courses being run 12 months of the year.

## **Marketing and Tourism – Speaker - Caroline Bramwell, The Olden Group**

We've seen a wealth of TV coverage this year with Antiques Road Trip, Long Lost Family, Michael Portillo walking the South West Coast Path, Take a Hike on BBC 2, as well as local coverage on BBC Spotlight for Birdman, Mark Ormrod on BBC Breakfast and Sea Ilfracombe. Plus we still have The Long Call airing on 25th-28th October which will be great for the Ilfracombe and the local area.

We've also featured in many 'Destination Tables', such as the Forbes Online 'How to have a cosy autumn weekend in North Devon' and taking the No 2 spot in the Telegraph's 'Top 21 Hidden Gems and Destinations' and many more.

I've been focusing also on our niche target audiences such as walkers, water sports, golf, families, foodies, etc. I had planned to hold a two day Press Inward Mission, hosting a group of editors around Ilfracombe. However, diaries never line up perfectly, so I will now be hosting Editors and journalists on bespoke stays here focusing on the interests of their readers. Titles such as Walk – the Ramblers Association magazine, which has a circulation of over 85,000; Britain – a consumer magazine celebrating the very best that Great Britain has to offer; Holiday Living – a consumer magazine covering holidaying in the UK, etc. I will also focus on those with an interest in water sports, fine dining, and 'out of season' holidays.

We also have the opportunity to promote Ilfracombe to the corporate market as a destination to host conferences throughout the year. By working together with local businesses who can stay open out of the summer season, we can attract another audience sector.

We all have our own ideas of the good and bad points locally, so I ran a Visitor survey through accommodation providers who agree to participate.

## Summary of results:

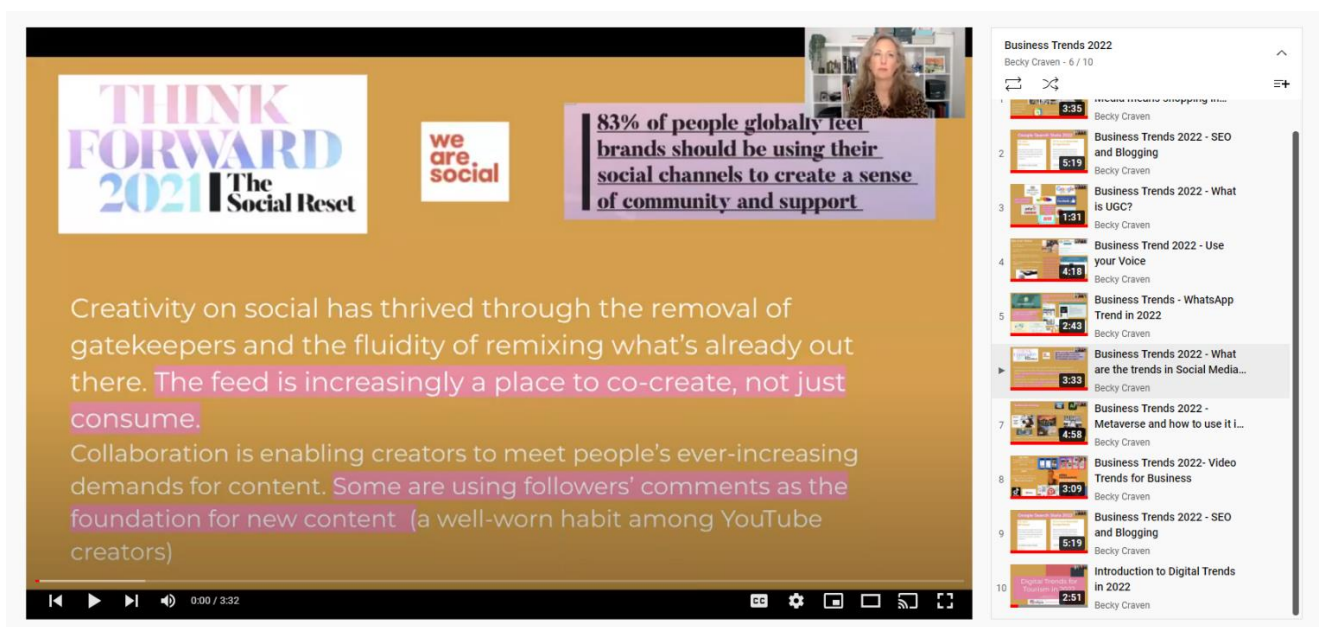
- Top things visitors enjoyed: Tunnels Beach, beaches, harbour area, views.
- What could be improved: Toilets, high street, traffic management around harbour
- Everyone found locals very friendly and welcoming
- 64% of respondents said their experience of Ilfracombe was better than expected
- 94% of respondents said their experience of Ilfracombe was better or as expected.
- Attractions visited included: SW Coast Path, Tunnels beach, Clovelly, Lynton & Lynmouth, Valley of the Rocks, Lundy, Woolacombe – all these we can work with in getting reciprocal visitors coming to Ilfracombe
- Things visitors would have liked: evening entertainment, open air music, more restaurant capacity, children's activities for bad weather
- Overall visitors would come again
- Overall visitors would recommend Ilfracombe
- 61% of respondents were over 50
- 68% of respondents were couples

Much of my work includes attending meetings with relevant groups and influencers, proactively seeking opportunities to highlight Ilfracombe further through the media, and reacting to stories and campaigns that present themselves.

The role of PR, Marketing and Tourism Ambassador (jointly funded for this year by ITC and IDTA) involves getting more eyes on Ilfracombe as a destination.

**Future Digital** – Unfortunately Becky Craven from Future Digital was unable to attend our event. However, she has prepared for us a series of nine videos that very much look at the business trends on social platforms for 2022. Each video is a bite size overview and is suitable for accommodation providers, food and drink outlets, retailers and service providers. Click the link for your free access

### [Future Digital Bitesize Videos](#)



The image shows a YouTube video player interface. The main video frame displays a presentation slide with a brown background. On the left, there is a logo for 'THINK FORWARD 2021 | The Social Reset'. In the center, there is a 'we are social' logo. On the right, a text box states: '83% of people globally feel brands should be using their social channels to create a sense of community and support'. Below the slide, there is text: 'Creativity on social has thrived through the removal of gatekeepers and the fluidity of remixing what's already out there. The feed is increasingly a place to co-create, not just consume. Collaboration is enabling creators to meet people's ever-increasing demands for content. Some are using followers' comments as the foundation for new content (a well-worn habit among YouTube creators)'. The video player controls at the bottom show a progress bar at 0:00 / 3:32. To the right of the video frame is a playlist titled 'Business Trends 2022' by Becky Craven, containing 10 videos with various durations.

## Petroc Business Engagement – Speaker Rozz Algar

The team from Petroc gave a whistle stop presentation on how they are reaching out and supporting local businesses and organisations. Have you considered offering a work placement to a student or perhaps taking on an Apprentice? Find out more [here](#)



And also here's a date for your diary. Petroc are holding a Business Expo on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> December to find out more and book tickets click [here](#)

## Premier of Promotional Films

There was a premier of the films that have been funded by the IDTA and Ilfracombe Town Council to help promote Ilfracombe as a top destination. North Devon Moving Images, a local Community Interest Company were appointed for the production of the films. They were given a storyboard of ideas and have spent the whole summer putting the films together. The main film, which is 100 seconds long, focuses on all that Ilfracombe can offer and is a fast paced film starting with day break and ending with sunset and is entitled "Visit Ilfracombe You need more than a Day". We then have three short 40 second films – One focusing on Activities entitled "Where every day is an adventure" A Gallery and Foodie one called "Creativity, Culture and Cuisine" and a Family film called "Family Fun for Everyone". These will be finalised and available within the next couple of weeks and will be shared on all our social media platforms for you to also share. They will also be uploaded to a Visit Ilfracombe website.

**SAVE THE DATE: Events 4 Ilfracombe with the IDTA are currently organising a Business Workshop Event at The Landmark on Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> March ... further details to follow, so watch this space!**

The IDTA have representatives on the Ilfracombe Marketing Group, Events 4 Ilfracombe, the TIC Board of Directors and The Harbour Forum, so are working hard on behalf of the local tourism and business community to promote Ilfracombe at the highest level, which in turn helps all local businesses. If you are not currently a member and would like to help us make a difference Membership is just £45 per year with £7.50 of that going to fund special tourism projects that benefit our town. [Download our brochure](#) and to find out more then drop us an email or call Marie at the TIC on 01271 863001.