

IMPORTANT  
INFORMATION  
ENCLOSED



ENGLISH RIVIERA

BID COMPANY

ERBID3  
CONSULTATION  
DOCUMENT  
2027-2031

ENGLISH RIVIERA  
BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

[www.englishriviera.co.uk/bid](http://www.englishriviera.co.uk/bid)



# CONTENTS

---

CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION .....	3
THE LAST FIVE YEARS: WHAT ERBID2 HAS DELIVERED .....	5
DESTINATION MARKETING .....	6-9
EVENTS & ACTIVITIES .....	11-13
THEMES & INSPIRATION .....	14-15
PARTNERSHIPS, COLLABORATION & COMMUNICATIONS .....	16-17
ABOUT US .....	18-19
ERBID3: BUILDING OUR FUTURE TOGETHER .....	20-21
HAVE YOUR SAY: ERBID3 CONSULTATION .....	22
CONSULTATION SESSIONS & CONTACT DETAILS .....	24





**CHRIS HART, CHAIR**  
ENGLISH RIVIERA BID COMPANY LTD

# A LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

---

Dear Levy-payers,

## A MESSAGE OF THANKS

First and foremost, I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to everyone who supports our wonderful destination in so many ways, and to all those who champion the work of the English Riviera BID (ERBID). Without your dedication, everything we have achieved simply wouldn't have been possible.

## REFLECTING ON OUR PROGRESS AND LOOKING AHEAD

This document outlines the progress we've made together over the past five years and sets out our bold ambitions for the next chapter—ERBID3. **But before moving forward, we want to hear from you. Your views on what's been accomplished so far and your ideas for the future are vital.**

I'm inviting you to take part in this important consultation, as we work to secure £3.5m of investment in destination marketing for a further five-year term. This funding would enable us to continue delivering key initiatives including national advertising through the proven Business Improvement District (BID) model.

As you may know, BIDs operate in five-year terms and must be renewed through a formal ballot of businesses. The current BID term (ERBID2) will conclude on 31st December 2026. With that in mind, The English Riviera BID Company, as the managing body, is now preparing for a new ballot to secure a third five-year term—ERBID3—beginning in January 2027.

Thanks to your support, ERBID2 has delivered fantastic results, investing over £2.5 million in professionally coordinated destination marketing across the Bay. In addition, we secured £1.2 million in funding from South West Water—one of the largest



supplementary contributions ever achieved by a BID. This enabled us to launch a major national TV advertising campaign that is already producing results.

### WHY YOUR VOICE MATTERS - NEXT STEPS

Looking ahead, it's important to be clear: without a third term, funding for vital activities—including national marketing campaigns, event sponsorships, media and PR initiatives, the official visitor website, and year-round Visitor Information Service—would cease entirely. **There is no replacement funding for destination marketing from Torbay Council.**

That's why your voice matters now more than ever. Our proposals include an increase to the levy for ERBID3, in order to continue with key marketing activities including high-profile national advertising.

We will be running a series of consultation sessions throughout the autumn (see back cover for further information). Based on your feedback from the consultation sessions, we will develop a Final Business Plan. This will be shared with all eligible levy-payers ahead of a confidential postal ballot in summer 2026. For ERBID3 to proceed, the ballot must secure a majority both in terms of the number of businesses voting and the total rateable value they represent.

**There is a great deal at stake.** If the ballot is unsuccessful, the ERBID3 will come to an end, and all funded activities, events, national advertising, projects and services will stop from 1st January 2027.

### THE FUTURE OF OUR DESTINATION

The tourism and hospitality industry is the heartbeat of our economy, and we believe that by continuing to work together as ERBID3, the English Riviera will be stronger and better positioned to compete with other destinations—both nationally and internationally—and to seize the exciting opportunities ahead.

Thank you again for everything you do. I look forward to hearing your thoughts and working alongside you as we shape the future of the English Riviera.

Yours sincerely,

*Chris Hart*

Chris Hart  
Chair, English Riviera BID Company



# THE LAST FIVE YEARS: WHAT ERBID2 HAS DELIVERED

---

The core mission of the English Riviera BID Company is to deliver proactive, professionally coordinated destination marketing that drives year-round visitor interest and benefits both large and small businesses.

Our work is focused around four strategic themes:

## 1 DESTINATION MARKETING

## 2 EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

## 3 THEMES & INSPIRATION

## 4 PARTNERSHIPS, COLLABORATION & COMMUNICATIONS

On the following pages is a summary of key achievements over the past five years.

Further details are available at: [www.englishriviera.co.uk/bid](http://www.englishriviera.co.uk/bid)

### “ Martin Jenkins - Daish's Holidays, Torquay

The work carried out by the ERBID is essential for targeted marketing and promotion of the area. A clear strategy working with not against local business in a common objective of increasing market share and highlighting Tor Bay as a destination of choice.

”

# 1

## DESTINATION MARKETING

### NATIONAL ADVERTISING

Levy-payers consistently identify national advertising as a top priority. ERBID2 is delivering a range of targeted campaigns across multiple platforms, including:

- TV Advertising: ITVX, Sky AdSmart
- Digital Campaigns: Google Ads, Meta Ads
- Digital Out-of-Home Posters

#### MAJOR CAMPAIGNS DELIVERED:

- *Welcome Back* (Post-COVID)
- *Ready for the Riviera*
- *Last Minute Summer*
- *Escape Your Everyday* (2025/26 family and couples' campaigns, part-funded by South West Water)
- Over 10 million views for the latest TV ads (family & couples-focused)

### SOCIAL MEDIA

We have significantly increased investment in social media through dedicated staffing and content production to showcase the English Riviera and promote local businesses leading to:



69% growth in followers



Projected 25 million reach by end of ERBID2



1.2 million views on best-performing post



Over 4,000 user-generated images



# READY FOR THE RIVIERA?

BOOK YOUR SUMMER HOLIDAY NOW!



## NATIONAL PR

To counter negative press and promote positive stories, ERBID2 hired a professional PR agency to deliver a focused national media strategy.

### OUTCOMES:

- National press coverage in major titles (The Sun, The Times, Guardian, Metro)
- Hosted journalist press trips
- Continuous positive PR output



## LOCAL MEDIA & PR

As the English Riviera's official tourism spokesperson, the ERBID Company maintained a strong presence across local media:

- Regular appearances on BBC Spotlight, BBC Radio Devon, Radio Exe, ITV Westcountry, and Torbay Weekly

## REGIONAL & LOCAL ADVERTISING CHANNELS

- Outdoor poster sites
- Heart Radio campaigns
- Adverts in: Visit Devon Guide, Devon Association of Tourist Attractions Guide
- Regular content in English Riviera Magazine, Beach Hut Magazine, Torbay Weekly, and Torbay Tomorrow

### Michelle Brown – Torquay Watersports, Torquay

We have seen annual growth year on year, and it is extremely clear that the advertising campaigns for 2025 have been successful as we are on our way to our most successful year to date with a 15-20% increase in turnover.



## OFFICIAL ENGLISH RIVIERA WEBSITE

Managed by the ERBID Company, [www.englishriviera.co.uk](http://www.englishriviera.co.uk) is the region's flagship visitor portal with 2,500+ pages of rich content and promotional opportunities.

### KEY BENEFITS AND RESULTS:



1 million annual visitors retained



Full business listings for levy-payers (valued at £250/year)



Accommodation search and What's On/Special Offers features



Over 30% open rate on monthly newsletters



Advertising campaigns drive traffic directly to the site

**Jason Parry -  
Mercure & ibis Styles, Paignton**

The work of the ERBID Company has been instrumental in raising the profile of the English Riviera as a leading UK visitor destination.

## VISITOR INFORMATION SERVICE

Our award-winning Visitor Information Service offers year-round face-to-face, phone, and email support, along with free maps and ticketing services.

### ACHIEVEMENTS INCLUDE:



Over 220,000  
visitors served



100,000+ maps  
distributed



Increased  
merchandise sales  
(e.g. Agatha Christie  
products)



Harbourside Meet  
& Greet for cruise  
passengers



Our reviews  
are as stunning  
as our views

ENGLISH  RIVIERA  
Naturally Inspiring  
TORQUAY • PAIGNTON • BRIXHAM

**Joe and Linda Lowe -  
Brookside Guest House, Brixham**  
The BID has demonstrated both  
vision and impact — driving  
visitor growth, supporting local  
businesses, and ensuring that  
Brixham and the wider English  
Riviera remain front of mind for  
both domestic and international  
audiences.



Adventurers welcome  
Discover new thrills in Devon's beautiful Bay

  
ENGLISH  
RIVIERA  
Naturally Inspiring



**John Jones – Dartmouth Steam Railway and Riverboat Company**

Put simply, the ERBID amplifies and strengthens our local exposure and, perhaps more importantly, promotes the Bay and all its attractions nationally in a way that would not be possible if we were to work independently.



# 2

## EVENTS & ACTIVITIES



### EVENT SPONSORSHIP

In response to stakeholder demand for more off-season events, ERBID2 has invested over £100k annually into key events, including:

- SUP World Cup
- English Riviera Airshow
- Bay of Lights
- Brixham Pirate Festival
- Agatha Christie Festival
- Torbay Pride
- English Riviera Walking Festival (*ERBID-organised*)
- England's Seafood FEAST (*ERBID-organised*)
- South West Sardine Festival
- Best Bar None Awards
- Offshore & Bays Music Festival
- Riviera Connect

#### IMPACT HIGHLIGHTS:

- SUP World Cup jointly secured for 2026 (first time in the UK)
- National media coverage increased
- Visitor footfall and overnight stays grew for the Airshow and Bay of Lights
- Ticket sales up for Agatha Christie and Walking Festival
- More venues joined the Seafood FEAST



#### Gary Blackmore – Torcroft Hotel, Torquay

The BID Company has become a critical voice for hospitality businesses, lobbying relevant professional bodies on our behalf and representing us at key events throughout the year.



## GROUP TRAVEL PROMOTION

- Published dedicated Group Travel Guide
- Represented at British Travel & Tourism Show
- Supported operators with promotional assets

### OUTCOMES:

- Increased engagement with UK and international operators
- More group tours choosing the English Riviera

## BUSINESS TOURISM

Promoting the Meet English Riviera and Meet Devon brands through:

- Trade show attendance (Meeting Show, IBTM Global, Association Congress)
- Business tourism focus group coordination

### RESULT:

- Post-COVID increase in national conference enquiries

**Will Ford -  
The Greenway Group Ltd,  
Brixham**

The ERBID Company's strategic marketing, community engagement, and unwavering dedication have not only elevated the English Riviera in Brixham, Paignton and Torquay, but have also provided essential support to hospitality businesses of all sizes during many peaks and troughs.



**“ Carol Gilman -  
Imperial Hotel, Torquay**  
Carolyn and the team are key contacts in the community and are passionate in driving visitors to The Bay and putting Torquay as a key visitor destination. ”

## CRUISE TOURISM

With Torbay Council and Harbour Authority, ERBID2 enhanced the English Riviera’s cruise appeal.

**ACTIONS TAKEN:**

- Hired Cruise Trade Specialist
- Produced new cruise brochure and promotional film
- Hosted familiarisation visits

**SUCCESSES:**

- New cruise operators attracted: Ambassador, Saga, Orient Express, Hebridean Island Cruises



**“ Maureen McAllister -  
Palace Theatre, Paignton**  
What truly sets ERBID apart is their commitment to showcasing our destination through vibrant press work, advertising and marketing, ensuring we maintain a high profile nationally. ”





3

## THEMES & INSPIRATION

### AGATHA CHRISTIE

The ERBID Company has supported maximising the potential of the Agatha Christie legacy.



#### RESULTS:

- Increased funding for the festival
- Increased media coverage
- Grown international attendance and ticket sales
- Developed a free trail leaflet and new visitor itineraries



### GLOBAL GEOPARK DEVELOPMENT

ERBID2 supported the English Riviera Global Geopark through creative investment and new experiences.

#### RESULTS:

- Secured UK Shared Prosperity Funding
- Created new promotional film and visitor experiences
- Increased national PR exposure



**Jackie Kelly -  
Redcliffe Hotel, Paignton**

Your commitment, professionalism, and collaborative approach make a real difference, particularly in helping to extend the season and drive year-round demand.





## ON THE WATER

The ERBID Company has supported the ambition for the English Riviera to become a leading SUP destination.

### RESULTS:

- SUP World Cup jointly secured for 2026 (first time in the UK)
- Increased national PR exposure
- Provided promotional support for local SUPHub community



## FOOD & DRINK

ERBID2 has continued the promotion of the England's Seafood Coast brand.



### RESULTS:

- Sponsorship of England's Seafood FEAST with more participating venues
- Promotion of Brixham Fish Market 'behind the scenes' tours
- Increased national PR exposure

### Julia Duthie - Blue Waters Lodge, Paignton

We would like to praise the ERBID Team for their continued efforts in promoting the Torbay area and their continued support for the small hospitality businesses in Paignton, Brixham and Torquay.



# 4

## PARTNERSHIPS, COLLABORATION & COMMUNICATIONS

### TOURISM RESEARCH

To guide strategic decisions and measure success, ERBID2 commissioned and analysed key research:

- Monthly "How's Business" surveys
- Annual visitor satisfaction and economic impact surveys
- Regional benchmarking
- Cryptosporidium impact study (led to South West Water funding)
- Cost of Living Business Impact Survey (with Great South West Partnership)

### PHOTOGRAPHY & VIDEOGRAPHY

Increased investment in destination imagery and video assets:

- 3,000+ copyright-free resources in the ERBID Image Library
- New promotional films for attractions, cruise, Brixham, and events

#### **Alex Foley - Guardhouse Café, Brixham**

The work Carolyn and her team did after the Crypto issues last year was incredible, they quickly pulled together a huge raft of evidence of the impact on local businesses, and fought successfully for over £1m of destination marketing support.





## STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

ERBID2 actively represents over 1,000 businesses through strong collaboration with:

- Visit England / Visit Britain
- Great South West Tourism Partnership
- Torbay Council
- Visit Devon
- Devon Association of Tourist Attractions
- Devon & Partners LVEP
- Torbay Place Leadership Board
- English Riviera Destination Management Group
- Brixham and Paignton Chambers of Commerce
- English Riviera Attractions
- Agatha Christie Festival Board
- Geopark Management Group

**Anthony Jones - Otto and Twenty1, Torquay**  
For hospitality businesses like mine, the BID is not just a support system; it's a necessity. Their work ensures that the English Riviera remains a vibrant, competitive destination that continues to thrive year-round.

## ADVOCACY & LOBBYING

As the official DMO, ERBID is a respected voice nationally and locally:

- Responded to the Cryptosporidium crisis with a cross-sector working group securing £1.2 million recovery funding from South West Water
- Contributed to national tourism policy, including:
  - National Registration Scheme
  - European Travel Directive

**Stephen Kings - Paignton Zoo, Paignton**  
We have been delighted to work with the ERBID team and have very much appreciated their support in increasing visitor numbers to Torbay and therefore as a consequence to Paignton Zoo.

# ABOUT US

The English Riviera BID Company's primary source of income is the ERBID Levy, which is paid annually by over 1,000 eligible tourism and hospitality businesses, and voluntary contributors. This levy currently generates nearly £500,000 per year.

Under ERBID2, the levy rate is 1.95% of a business's rateable value, with a minimum payment of £150 per year—a rate that has remained unchanged since the start of the ERBID in 2017.

Looking ahead to ERBID3, an increase to the levy rate will be necessary to maintain investment in core initiatives such as national advertising and digital marketing campaigns, and to continue delivering at the high standard our businesses expect.

## COMPANY STRUCTURE

The ERBID is delivered on behalf of over 1,000 levy-paying businesses by an independent, not-for-profit, private sector-led company: The English Riviera BID Company Ltd.

- Company membership is open to all levy-payers, who are also eligible to stand for election as non-executive directors.
- Director roles are voluntary and unpaid.



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The current ERBID Board includes a mix of elected, co-opted, and fixed-position members representing businesses of all sizes across the English Riviera:

**Chris Hart – Chair (ERBID)**

Chief Executive, Wollens Solicitors

**Anthony Payne-Neale – Vice Chair (ERBID)**

Owner, Court Prior Boutique B&B

**Carolyn Custerson – Chief Executive Officer (ERBID)**

**Andy Banner-Price**

Owner, The 25 Boutique B&B

**Martin Brook**

Owner, Pilgrims Rest Cottages

**Pippa Craddock**

Director, Business and Marketing Solutions

**Richard Cuming**

Partner, Bygones

**Alan Denby**

Director of Pride in Place, Torbay Council

**Claire Flower**

Director, Beverley Holidays

**Jason Garside**

Managing Director, Torquay Leisure Hotels

**Tim Godfrey**

Partner, Bishop Fleming

**Jim Parker**

Editor, Torbay Weekly

**Kelly Widley**

Consultant, Leisure and Hospitality

**Will Ford**

Owner, Greenway Group  
(Observer, South West Water Fund)

## OUR TEAM

We operate with a lean, dedicated staff team to keep overheads low and maximise value for levy-payers. The ERBID is supported by three full-time staff:

**Carolyn Custerson**

Chief Executive Officer

**Alison Bayliss**

Communications Manager

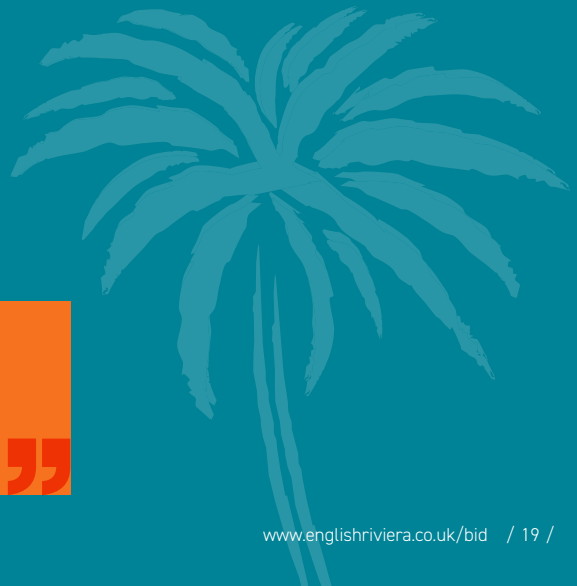
**Katrine Harrington**

Visitor Information Manager

## STAYING CONNECTED WITH YOU

We're committed to keeping our levy-payers informed, engaged, and up to date through a range of communication channels:

- Attending local business meetings to provide ERBID updates
- Monthly e-newsletters
- Frequent email updates with relevant industry information
- Business website: [www.englishriviera.co.uk/bid](http://www.englishriviera.co.uk/bid)
- Hosting regular ERBID update meetings



**Hervé Regent -  
Beacon House B&B, Brixham**

We're incredibly grateful for the efforts of the ERBID team. Their commitment, professionalism, and belief in our town have made a tangible difference.

# ERBID3: BUILDING OUR FUTURE TOGETHER



Since the launch of ERBID2, we've faced significant challenges together—from recovering after the COVID-19 pandemic to navigating the ongoing cost of living crisis and rising operational expenses.

Throughout these pressures, the ERBID Company has remained committed to supporting the tourism and hospitality sector. With your continued support, we are now proposing a third term—ERBID3.

If a YES vote is secured in June 2026, the current ERBID Board will step down, and a newly elected Board will assume responsibility for the company from January 2027.

## WHAT COULD ERBID3 DELIVER?

ERBID3 could generate £3.5m of core funding between 2027 and 2031, dedicated to delivering high-quality, professionally coordinated Destination Marketing.

**Based on the feedback received in the 2025 mid-term survey, we are proposing the following priority areas for investment:**

### NATIONAL MARKETING CAMPAIGNS

Continued delivery of high-profile annual national campaigns, targeting key markets such as families and couples—building on the success of the 2025/26 campaigns part-funded by South West Water.

### EVENTS DEVELOPMENT

Increased investment in the development and promotion of signature events to drive off-season visitation and economic impact.

### VISITOR INFORMATION SERVICE

Continued year-round support, including face-to-face services, free maps, and promotional materials.

### OFFICIAL ENGLISH RIVIERA WEBSITE

Ongoing development, content creation, and promotional activity to support all levy-paying businesses with dedicated listings and features.

### SOCIAL MEDIA EXPANSION

Greater investment to expand reach, engagement, and influence across all key platforms.

## MEDIA & PR

Continued delivery of first-class national and regional media coverage to raise the English Riviera's profile.

## PHOTOGRAPHY & VIDEOGRAPHY

Ongoing management of the copyright-free image library and production of high-quality visual content for business use.

## GROUP, BUSINESS & CRUISE TOURISM

Continued year-round support, including face-to-face services, free maps, and promotional materials.

## INTERNATIONAL MARKETING

Closer collaboration with partners to boost inbound visitor numbers from overseas markets.

## TOURISM RESEARCH

Continued investment in tracking visitor trends, benchmarking, and economic impact studies to inform strategic decisions.

## AGATHA CHRISTIE PROMOTION

Strengthened promotion of Agatha Christie's legacy to grow international tourism interest.

## UNESCO GLOBAL GEOPARK

Continued partnership to protect and promote our UNESCO designation and introduce more visitor experiences.

## THE CHALLENGE AHEAD

The South West Water Cryptosporidium Recovery Fund enabled us to double our advertising investment in 2025/26. These high-profile national campaigns brought clear results—new audiences, stronger branding, and increased visitor numbers.

**To maintain this level of impact post-2026, we need to secure increased core funding,** as the South West Water fund will no longer be available.

## PROPOSED LEVY CHANGES FOR ERBID3

The rate of the ERBID levy hasn't changed since the introduction of ERBID1 in 2017 - but we all know that inflation has.

**We are proposing the following increase for the ERBID3 levy:**

- Levy Rate Increase:  
From 1.95% to 2.5% of rateable value  
*(Example: A business with a rateable value of £10,000 would see its levy rise from £195 to £250 annually)*
- Minimum Payment Increase:  
From £150 to £250 per year

We understand the pressures businesses face—but we believe that continued, enhanced investment in national marketing campaigns is essential to keep our destination competitive.

With these changes, we can invest over £3.5 million in the next five years — *excluding any additional funding we attract.*



**James Hull -  
Kents Cavern, Torquay**

The ERBID has consistently risen to the challenge, adapting quickly and proactively to the fast-changing landscape of our industry. Their support has been both responsive and impactful.





# HAVE YOUR SAY: ERBID3 CONSULTATION

This consultation aims to shape the Final ERBID3 Business Plan based on your views, helping define the future of destination marketing in the English Riviera from 2027 to 2031.

**Your input is vital.** You have already let us have some information in the Mid Term Survey and we will be inviting you to attend one of our Autumn 2025 consultation events (see back page for details).

## PLANNED ACTIVITIES INCLUDE:

- Distribution of this Consultation Document to all eligible businesses (by post and email)
- One-to-one meetings available upon request, with follow-up communications
- Presentations to local stakeholder groups and associations
- Consultation sessions held across Torquay, Paignton, and Brixham

**Your feedback will directly influence the content of the Final Business Plan, which will be circulated in Spring 2026, ahead of the vote.**



This Consultation Document has been produced by the English Riviera BID Company, in preparation for an ERBID3 Final Business Plan and ballot in summer 2026.

### **AUTUMN CONSULTATION SESSIONS**

Informal consultation sessions are being arranged to take place from October and throughout the autumn 2025.

### **VENUES, DATES, AND TIMES**

If you have previously shared your email address\* then we will contact you. The details will also be published on the ERBID business website by mid-September, and will be detailed on the link below.

[www.englishriviera.co.uk/bid/erbid3](http://www.englishriviera.co.uk/bid/erbid3)

All eligible business representatives are invited to attend a consultation, review the proposals and share their feedback.

**If you would like to contact me direct, please get in touch:**

#### **Carolyn Custerson**

Chief Executive Officer, English Riviera BID Company

Mobile: 07968 261845

[carolyn@englishrivierabid.co.uk](mailto:carolyn@englishrivierabid.co.uk)

English Riviera BID Company  
5 Vaughan Parade, Torquay TQ2 5JG

\*If you believe we may not have your email address, please share it with Carolyn using the contact details provided above.



# ENGLISH RIVIERA

**BID COMPANY**

[www.englishriviera.co.uk/bid](http://www.englishriviera.co.uk/bid)