

Looe Neighbourhood Development Plan
Brief for Looe Tourism Study
December 2019

The Looe Town Council is inviting tenders from suitably qualified and experienced consultants to undertake a study to provide the Town Council with an overview as to the current and likely future trends of demand and supply for tourism accommodation in the Looe catchment area.

Introduction and Background

1. Looe is an historic settlement with everything it takes to be a classic Cornish coastal town: fishing harbour, railway branch-line, pier, beach, and narrow streets with a huddle of quaint cottages, interesting shops, and good places to eat and drink. Today, the main forms of income and employment for the town is tourism, the fishing industry and the provision of services to the local community.

2. Thus the great environment supports the town's prosperity. However global warming is bringing with it rising sea-levels and aggressive storms, which are likely to increase in intensity, leading to frequent serious flooding within the harbour and town centre, harming its fabric and form, and extending coastal erosion nearby. Heavy and prolonged rainfall, historically a cause of land instability, is likely to worsen. This, combined with many years of poor waste-water management in the wider river catchment, has put bathing water quality at risk. These represent fundamental threats to Looe. Looe Town Council has declared a Climate Emergency and the Neighbourhood Development Plan will be one of the core actions in planning to address the climate crisis.

3. The Looe Neighbourhood Development Plan aims to tackle these challenges head on. The Draft NDP recognises that the tourism industry is of massive importance to the prosperity of Looe, but as its focus has been on tackling environmental change the Plan so far has been very much concerned with protecting and developing the tourism product, i.e. the physical natural and heritage environment that make the town a tourism destination.

4. However, it is now apparent that trends in tourism accommodation are shifting and that to maintain its position in the market, it is necessary for the NDP to also deal in greater detail with accommodation issues, ensuring that as a tourism destination the Town (and its catchment) has the stock of accommodation that meets current and projected customer expectations.

Study Requirements

5. Before the NDP can formulate sensible planning policies to guide future accommodation developments, a solid evidence base is required.

6. Consequently, there is a need for the NDP Steering Group to be informed on:

- The shape of current and likely future accommodation trends generally, and specifically in destinations such as Looe; taking into account the changing needs based on demographic changes and evolving customer trends with regard to quality and facilities
- The characteristics of new and evolving forms of tourism accommodation; especially regarding an aging population and the affluent baby boomer market over the next 10 to 20 years
- The issues that planning policies should be designed around to facilitate and/or regulate the evolution in the tourist accommodation stock in a sustainable manner; with a focus on low/zero carbon accommodation and activities
- Data on the current supply of various forms of tourist accommodation stock in Looe and its catchment, and projected future requirements; working with Visit Cornwall
- Data on the extent of local economy supported by tourism and how this may change building on the emerging review of tourism trends being undertaken by Visit Cornwall.

7. The Steering Group are particularly interested in the characteristics of new and evolving forms of tourist accommodation, especially to make it fully accessible and inclusive the impact that Airbnb is having/likely to have, and the demand for and requirements of low cost to luxury hotel development, and the impact they may have on other accommodation sectors.

8. Areas of concern are:

- The risks of Airbnb to its guests (ie as unregistered and uninspected accommodation largely outside the regulatory regimes applying to more traditional forms of accommodation) and the impacts this could have on the reputation of the destination; working with Visit Cornwall and the Tourism Alliance campaign for compulsory registration and min "legal and safe" inspections
- The extent that emergence of Airbnb or other emerging forms of accommodation may impact on the local supporting infrastructure for tourism accommodation;

- The impacts of macro-economic change.

9. The Steering Group also wish the evidence to include illustrative case studies from different accommodation sectors and similar destinations, and some sampling of opinion about market changes and conditions from local tourism providers.

10. Bids to prepare the study are invited. Consultants are asked to devise a suitable methodology achievable within the estimated budget (see below) which will deliver well-informed advice covering the issues described backed by an appropriate level of factual information.

Experience and expertise, conditions of contract, etc

11. It is expected that the successful consultants will demonstrate previous experience and knowledge from the following work areas:

- Coastal and heritage-based tourism;
- Tourism accommodation planning;
- Business and market trends analysis;
- Sustainable tourism development;
- Low/zero carbon accommodation
- Policy formulation and strategic planning;
- Accessible and inclusive tourism
- Data collection, interpretation and presentation;

12. Potential consultants must be able to supply references (ideally local authority) that can endorse the above abilities.

Project outputs and programming

13. The Consultants will be expected to produce hard (3 copies) and electronic copies of both the draft and final documents. Electronic documents must be produced as PDF docs suitable for uploading onto the Council's web site (maximum 20mb). Large PDF documents can be split into smaller sections if necessary.

14. All documents must be capable of printing on domestic desktop printers, with restricted use of colour, and generally A4 format. Use of A3 for maps and plans is acceptable provided that A4 format documents of same are available.

15. The principles of 'colour blindness aware' design should be followed to ensure readability (see <https://sidigital.co/articles/designing-for-colour-blindness/>). Fonts which aid readability for people with vision impairment should be used, for example those with easily recognizable characters such as Arial, Verdana, Tahoma, and Calibri.

16. The consultants should allow for two meetings with the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group and should as part of their submission provide a programme identifying key milestones and how they can meet the relevant deadlines.

17. The target for completion of work is 17th January 2020 with any variation to be agreed by the Client

Client authority and points of contact

18. The client officer will be: Mel Colton-Dyer, Commercial Strategy director and Clerk, Looe Town Council

Conditions of contract

19. The contract will be subject to Looe Town Council's normal conditions of contract. This will include a requirement to indemnify the Council against any third-party claims and the ability to provide details of adequate public liability insurance (currently, £xx).

20. Consultants are reminded that if they choose to sub-contract any part of the work to a third party, they must ensure that the sub-contractors abide by the same conditions. Responsibility for managing the sub-contracts and for the quality of all work carried out by the sub-contractor, rests with the consultant.

Copyright and ownership

21. Copyright, and all rights in the nature of copyrights, in the material produced in the performance and during the currency of the contract, shall vest in Looe Town Council. Such material shall not be reproduced or disseminated by the consultants for any purpose without the written permission of the Council.

22. The project work, when completed, will be the property of Looe Town Council, which shall be under no contractual obligation to the company which has carried out the work and the Council will be free to pursue the recommendations in whole or in part as they think fit.

Information required for the bid submission

23. Bids must consist of:

- A written proposal outlining the proposed methodology for undertaking the requirement.
- A breakdown of actual costs for each element of the work, including details of travel, subsistence and VAT. Costs incurred in the preparation of the quotation should not be included.

Selection Criteria

24. The Council will consider submissions on the basis of a combination of quality and price; it is not committed to accept the lowest or any bid submitted.

25. The submissions will be judged against the following evaluation criteria:

- Appropriate qualifications, skills and expertise within the team
- Credibility and track record of the bidder
- Price
- Appropriateness of methodology and timescales

Fees

26. The budget figure allowed for this work is approximately £3,000 to £5,000

27. Payment will be made on satisfactory completion of the final documents or, at agreed stages, to be decided at appointment.

Submission Date

29. Bids offering to carry out this work should be received at the Town Council Offices, at the address below, no later than 12.00 hours on 20th December 2019.

CONTACT

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