

PROJECT CLOSING REPORT – *Talking Signposts 2014*

1. OVERVIEW

Provide informed members of the Town Team and other volunteers at one or two strategic points in the town to direct visitors to places of interest and to provide other local information.

2. DETAIL OF WHAT TOOK PLACE

The Talking Signposts operated by the map near Turner's Memorial from early July until the end of August. Equipment and information was provided for the Signposters which included BTT tabards and bag, an sign on an extending pole which was attached to the map frame and Buxton Guides and other information on events. The equipment was kindly stored at MiniBugs by Rachel and Claire. This was a vast improvement on 2013 when everything was at the TIC in the Pavilion Gardens. Margaret Charlton maintained the supplies which was much appreciated.

The project was pretty well self managing as Doodle Poll was used to rota Signposters. Most were happy to do this themselves as, if they had undertaken to do a shift and then were unable to fill it, they could remove themselves and others could immediately see the gap (in theory!).

3. ASSESSMENT AGAINST AIMS AND SUCCESS CRITERIA

The aims of the project were to:

Aim	Assessment
To enhance the visitor experience by ensuring that they find their chosen destinations.	Done
To suggest visits to key features and parts of the town which they might otherwise not see.	Done
To provide information about activities and events in the town.	Done
To maximise "visitor spend" by introducing them to events and shops which they might otherwise miss.	Done
To extend similar help to local residents who need and request such guidance.	Done

The measurable success criteria of the project were as follows:

Success Criteria	Assessment
We recruit at least as many volunteers as last year	21 volunteers
At least 80% of the planned shifts are staffed, with at least one volunteer on each	60 shifts in July. 12 shifts not covered 16 shifts in August. 52 shifts not covered.
The average numbers of enquiries per shift is at least as high as last year	1763 interactions in July 447 interactions in August A total of 2210 interaction. As most enquiries are from at least two people, at least 4420 people were influenced by the BTT Talking Sign Posters
Feedback from visitors about the service is positive	Yes, very. Locals, too.
The scheme is covered by the relevant local media	Buxton Advertiser, Pure Buxton and Facebook
The volunteers report back positively and are willing to do it again	Yes . an enjoyable experience for most and no negative feedback about it

4. ANY FURTHER BENEFITS

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5. COSTS

Project expenditure against budget was as follows:

EXPENDITURE		
	Budget	Actual
Make three more tabards and extra logoed bag	£ 25	£
Produce Tourist Information sign	£ 15	
Two 'clickers'	£ 20	
Two notebook	£ 5	
Total	£	£
Net Expenditure	£ 65	£

INCOME		
	Budget	Actual
Total	£	£
Surplus	£	£

6. LEARNING POINTS FOR THE FUTURE

For comparison with 2013:

The concept was trialled for two weeks over the Buxton Festival period in July 2013, with 21 volunteers covering 41 two hour shifts over the Festival Fortnight. Around 700 enquiries were dealt with in this period (an average of 17 per shift), with a full record kept of these. The trial was agreed to have been very successful, but it was noted that most users were general visitors, and not in Buxton for the Festival.

Unlike 2013, no record was made in 2014 of where visitors came from or where they were staying etc. This is potentially useful information and perhaps we should review this for 2015.

The Talking Signpost service is very worthwhile providing for the people we help, but we didn't have enough volunteers to sustain it for more than a short period.

Over the two months with 21 volunteers:

3 volunteers did 7 shifts each

1 volunteer did 6

3 volunteers did 5

6 volunteers did 4,

2 volunteers did 3

6 volunteers did 1 shift.

Mornings have more interactions than afternoons.

This project is not costly to deliver; the use of Doodle Poll makes it easier to manage and any help that is provided is better than none. The service is not advertised – if we are there, we are there – so even if we only do a small number of shifts anything is better than nothing. In addition, those who volunteer really enjoy it – 13 out of 21 did four shifts or more – and there is no pressure for anyone to do it.

We should carry on in 2015!

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