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26 October 2009

## **Brightlingsea Business Association Chairman's Report** **October 2009**

**It's been a busy year for the Business Association and bearing in mind the current economic climate we have tried to re-evaluate our position in the community.**

**Our policy has always been to work for business and with the community and to this end we have tried to look at all aspects of the Town and Waterside and decide how best we can make a sustainable contribution.**

**Over the last year we have implemented new initiatives and revisited schemes that we already have in place to try and help shopkeepers and other traders in the local community.**

**Our main aim has been to increase the number of visitors to the Town and to encourage local people to use the facilities provided by local businesses in order to help maintain a viable and vibrant Town centre and Waterfront thus sustaining the local economy.**

**One of our major priorities has always been Tourism which we realised was going to play a major part in helping provide a means of developing a healthy and sustainable economy to the benefit of the whole community.**

**As part of our tourism strategy we strived to promote the Town and Waterside with promotional literature, working with groups, including the Town Council and Carnival Association, to promote new events and support established annual events. We also arranged for such events as Continental Markets and, of course, our annual Late Night Shopping evening, all of the above bringing in new people to the Town helping the local economy.**

**Another of our aims was to start an Inward Investment programme to try and revitalise the Town Centre by again promoting Brightlingsea 'Open for Business'. This involved displaying details of empty shops in the town on our website and furnishing details to Tendring District Council to endeavour to attract new businesses to the Town. This has proved an excellent initiative as we now have several of our empty shops now let.**

**We have also produced a Business Directory, which was delivered to every household in Brightlingsea and Thorrington, to encourage residents to use local shops and businesses wherever possible, additional copies**

were also made available at local outlets as well as libraries and TIC's in the region.

The directory gave all local businesses the opportunity to put their details in front of residents for a minimal cost or take the opportunity to join the Business Association. This initiative has worked well and, in the process, helped double the Association's membership. Feedback on this scheme has proved positive with subscribers reporting enquiries and work being obtained as a result of their insertion in the directory.

We have produced, or are in the process of producing, a set of leaflets giving information on local facilities to assist people who are considering visiting or moving to the Town. The 'Relocating to Brightlingsea' leaflet, although only having been produced recently, has been requested and supplied to interested parties.

We hope to continue with the above schemes and introduce other new initiatives in the future to try and make Brightlingsea an attractive place to visit, live and work, by promoting sustainable improvements to the local economy.

We have concluded 2009, in conjunction with a grant from Brightlingsea Town Council, by purchasing new Christmas lights for the town centre.

**We will be holding an official switch on of these lights, albeit somewhat early this year, on Friday, 6<sup>th</sup> November 2009, at 4.30 p.m.**

**After this brief report I would like to thank the following, Brian House who is our Vice Chairman and incidentally got me to take the BBA on 19 years ago and is always there when I need advice, Bob Shotton whose knowledge is invaluable and who has been a great help in organising events and also the leaflets that are on our website, David Newman who at a minutes notice**

**produces posters & leaflets etc. and looks after our website without too much wingeing and also all the rest of the Committee who without their help the Association would not survive.....and a special thank you to Jean who always tells me that behind every man is an even greater woman, can I argue with that?**

**I would like to say I enjoy working for the BBA but would point out that you should be looking to train up a new Chairman as, if I am voted in for another year of office, this will definitely be my last. Many thanks for the help from everyone including Brightlingsea Town Council and other organisations over my period of office.**

**Des Rowson** Chairman