



**Agency brief  
for the provision of creative, digital  
and media services 2025 & 2026**

**November 2024**

## About the English Riviera BID Company

Launched in January 2017, the English Riviera Business Improvement District Company (ERBID) is a private sector led, not-for-profit limited company that is governed by a board comprising of ERBID levy payers or equivalent voluntary financial contributors. The ERBID Company represents 1,300 levy payers across the tourism and hospitality sector.

The key role of the ERBID Company is to lead on Destination Marketing and ERBID1 (2017-2021) raised nearly £3 million over 5 years to invest in professionally co-ordinated destination marketing to promote the English Riviera and to be guardian of the official English Riviera brand.

Following the success of ERBID1, a second ballot was staged in the summer of 2021 resulting in an increased majority vote and ERBID2 (2022-2026) was launched in January 2022. ERBID2 represents over 1,300 eligible tourism and hospitality businesses operating within the official Torbay boundary with a rateable value of £3k+.

Over the 5 year operating period of ERBID2, £3 million will be raised through the BID levy to invest in the marketing of the English Riviera, as one of the UK's premier resorts.

Our strategic objective is to extend the traditional summer season and attract new visitors to the destination by positioning ourselves as a 'must visit' coastal destination.

## About the English Riviera

The English Riviera, in South Devon, is made up of the towns of Torquay, Paignton and Brixham. It boasts 22 miles of coastline and 20 beaches – several have been awarded Blue Flags and Seaside Awards. There are a wide variety of visitor attractions from a model village, prehistoric caves, and the UK's biggest waterpark, to a zoo, museums, and a farm attraction. It is the birthplace of world-renowned crime writer Agatha Christie and as such attracts visitors from around the world. In 2007 we were designated as a Global Geopark by UNESCO because of our unique and often spectacular geology and natural environment.

Our watersports offering is vast and includes boat trips and ferries, stand up paddleboarding, yoga on the beach, sailing, sea swimming, kayaking, canoeing, coastering and fishing trips. Visitors can also walk the beautiful South West Coast Path.

For those who want a more relaxing holiday, we have a variety of spas and a fabulous offering of food and drink. Seafood is our speciality; we are home to Brixham Fish Market and we are known as England's Seafood Coast.

Many major events take place throughout the year including the annual English Riviera Airshow, Agatha Christie Festival, England's Seafood FEAST, English Riviera Walking Festival, and the festive Bay of Lights throughout December.

## Facts and figures

- 22 miles of naturally inspiring coastline bordered by the South West Coast Path
- £500 million is generated in tourism from 400,000 visitors annually
- Designation as a UNESCO Global Geopark with 400 million years of geological heritage
- 10 Blue Flag beaches and Seaside Awards
- Birthplace of Agatha Christie
- Home of world-renowned Brixham Fish Market
- International cruise port

## Our brand



The English Riviera brand is iconic and has a long history. Although geographically, and as a local authority, the area is known as Torbay, the brand 'English Riviera' has been used for decades as it is much more inviting and consumer friendly. The area is likened to the French Riviera due its mild climate and palm trees. Our brand logo has used a strong image of a palm tree for a long time, supported in recent campaigns by the strapline 'Naturally inspiring.' We currently position our brand as having strong associations with coast, the Bay and beach.

## Marketing strategy

The domestic marketing strategy for 2024 (see appendix 1) is closely aligned to the [Destination Management Plan 2022-2030](#) with the following brand pillars, for growth, identified:

- Family holidays
- Nature
- Culture
- On the water
- Food & drink
- Relaxation / wellness

### *Target audience*

The target audiences for 2024 are:

- Families – extended, multi-generational with children from Birmingham, Wolverhampton, and Coventry
- Empty nesters
- Solo travellers
- Young actives – 20s-30s year-round but mostly autumn to spring\*
- Cultural explorers – 30+ taking short breaks year-round mid-week and at weekends from Bristol, Cardiff, Hertfordshire, and Buckinghamshire\*
- Business tourism
- Groups – UK and international
- Independent international travellers

\*These two audiences have been identified as new audiences and present a real growth opportunity for the shoulder season with short-breaks.

### *Current marketing activity*

In 2024 our marketing activity has comprised of the following:

- On-going, year-round digital PPC campaign aimed at affinity groups and relevant search interests
- Several PPC campaigns around the brand pillars to our target audiences
- Two multi-media campaigns in Bristol specifically targeting the 'young actives' and 'cultural explorers'. Campaign comprised PPC and OOH
- A last-minute campaign in Birmingham – OOH and digital – aimed at last minute summer family holidays
- Digital campaigns around the key events i.e. Walking Festival, Airshow and Bay of Lights
- An urgent recovery digital campaign in late-May because of the cryptosporidium outbreak in Brixham

See appendix 2 for summary of digital marketing activity.

### *PR strategy & activity*

In March 2024 we appointed a new PR Agency, [Four](#), following some national press around negative perceptions of the resort with the objective to neutralise these and push out more positive stories. A fresh approach working with designated spokespeople, and standardised and brand aligned messaging has been adopted for the first time. See appendix 3 for schedule of planned activity which was disrupted overnight with the cryptosporidium outbreak in Brixham resulting in 3,000+ pieces of negative national media coverage. Crisis PR management has been a major part of Four's work in supporting us.

### *Marketing resources and shared creative assets*

We have invested heavily in photography and videography and have a copyright-free image library with over 3,000 creative assets for our creative agencies and individual stakeholders to use by registering online.

### *Measuring success*

Working with our Marketing Agency, all marketing activity needs to be measured with targets and ROIs agreed, as we are required to report back to the Board and Levy Payers.

## **The brief**

We currently work with two creative/digital/media agencies to deliver our marketing activity with whom we have worked with for several years, however we are keen to engage with one main leading agency for delivery in 2025 and 2026 following the cryptosporidium outbreak.

We are looking for a full-service agency who can deliver creative development, media planning and buying, and digital marketing including content creation. The appointed agency must be familiar with, and ideally have experience of, working with other tourism and destination marketing organisations and have some experience of working on crisis marketing and recovery campaigns.

### **The challenge**

2024 has been a challenging year for the English Riviera brand, and Devon as whole. Following the cryptosporidiosis outbreak in May 2024 which prompted a boil water notice in Brixham and surrounding areas, there was wide-spread negative media coverage across the world resulting in loss of business across Devon.

The opportunities for our target audiences to see and hear the negative news totalled 33 billion from 3,000+ news articles. Many tourism businesses faced cancellations not just in the immediate aftermath of the outbreak but forward bookings into summer and beyond.

In May and June 2024, £33,982,000 visitor revenue was lost across Devon, with £9,965,000 of the loss occurring in Torbay. It is estimated that a further £7,645,000 has been lost for 2024 forward booking cancelled across Devon.

In order to mitigate the impact of the outbreak, to aid businesses to recover, and to repair the reputational and brand damage of Brixham, the English Riviera and Devon, intensive national marketing campaigns are needed for 2025 and 2026. These campaigns need to target our core areas of the country and those that attracted the most negative news coverage. They will need to span all media channels to ensure we reach as many of the people who have seen, heard, and/or read the news articles.

The main objectives of the 2025 national campaigns are:

- To begin to recover the brands and reputation of the English Riviera, specifically Brixham, and Devon as a whole
- To begin to build back visitor revenue from staying visitors

The priority audiences to target in 2025 with national campaigns are:

- The family market – extended, multi-generational with children from Birmingham, Wolverhampton, and Coventry. A new TV advert aimed at this audience is currently nearing completion
- Cultural explorers – 30+ taking short breaks year-round mid-week and at weekends from Bristol, Cardiff, Hertfordshire, and Buckinghamshire. It is envisaged that we will require a TV for this target audience

Alongside, our other target audiences:

- Empty nesters
- Solo travellers
- Young actives – 20s-30s year-round but mostly autumn to spring

As a result of the cryptosporidiosis outbreak, and after much negotiation with South West Water, they have agreed to partially fund marketing activity for 2025 and 2026.

To that end, we are seeking a highly creative agency that can plan, execute and deliver compelling national campaigns for 2025 to aid the resort's recovery.

## The budget

The total Destination Marketing budget for 2025, including the contribution from South West Water is £874,250 with around £510,000 allocated for the national campaign to meet the objectives above. The total Destination Marketing budget for 2026 is £843,750, with the allocation for national campaign yet to be set.

## Timescale

If we are happy with the working relationship in 2025, we envisage that this new contract will continue to the end of ERBID2 – 31<sup>st</sup> December 2026.

## The process

### *Initial tender*

If you are interested in working with us, we invite you to submit a written tender covering the following areas:

- About your agency and services provided
- Recent examples of any Destination Marketing work, or any relevant work, undertaken
- The team who would be working on this account and their experience
- Any experience you have of delivering crisis marketing activity
- How you would approach working with us
- Ideas for the 2025 national campaigns
- Your fees

### *Pitch*

If we wish to talk to you further about your tender, you will be invited to Torquay to meet with the ERBID Executive Team and board members on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> December 2024.

### *Timescales*

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| • Deadline for receipt of tender submission | - | Friday 22 <sup>nd</sup> November 2024   |
| • Invitation to pitch                       | - | Thursday 28 <sup>th</sup> November 2024 |
| • Pitches                                   | - | Monday 16 <sup>th</sup> December 2024   |
| • Appointment of successful agency          | - | Friday 20 <sup>th</sup> December 2024   |
| • Initial meeting                           | - | w/c Monday 6 <sup>th</sup> January 2025 |

## Contact details

We invite you to submit your tender document to Carolyn Custerson, CEO, **by no later than Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2024** to [carolyn@englishrivierabid.co.uk](mailto:carolyn@englishrivierabid.co.uk). If you have any questions, Carolyn can also be contacted on 07968 261845.

## Appendices & Attachments

1. 2024 marketing strategy
2. 2024 digital marketing timetable
3. Timetable of PR activity
4. Destination marketing update (May 2024)
5. ERBID2 business plan