

**Quality & Skills Panel - February 21<sup>st</sup> 2007**  
**University of Derby Buxton campus**

**In attendance:**

(TW) Tony Wheeler	DMP Board Member/ The Old Lock Up, Wirksworth
(DJ) David James	Chief Executive, Visit Peak District & Derbyshire DMP
(GH) Georgina Heathcote	Quality Executive, Visit Peak District & Derbyshire DMP
(JD) Jackie Dennis	People First
(CC) Chris Collins	LSC- Derbyshire
(AC) Angela Crawford	RED Regional Business Development Manager/ DMP Board
(DE) Denise Edwards	Hardwick Hall
(JO) Jim Oribine	Derby Tourism

**1. Introductions and Apologies**

Apologies from:

(SB) Sally Bruckshaw	Principal Tourism Officer, Amber Valley
(DC) David Croasdale	General Manager, Palace Hotel

AC and JO arrived a few minutes late but only missed introductions.

**2. Quality and Skills projects proposed for next financial year**

**a) GH**

EMT asked for an expression of interest in any of the following for the Quality signature project April 07- March 08:

- Food and Drink
- Taxi training initiative
- Student project (similar to the Nottingham STARS [www.nottinghamshirestars.org.uk/](http://www.nottinghamshirestars.org.uk/))
- Accessibility module focused on a new Family Quality book (*GH to attach latest information in email with minutes*)

The taxi training initiative has been previously done by Nottingham city and TW took an interest as the city area is included and the project should include the whole area. As this is currently a city based initiative it was deemed unsuitable at the moment and GH dismissed it for this year until the city developments are further along. Derby Diplomat is in the same style but without accreditation and includes Traffic Wardens, retail and any customer facing employee in Derby City.

AC noted that the student initiative regarding career pathways presents different issues to those in a city also. It would be very different from the current STARS initiative in Nottingham. JD – The STARS awards in Nottingham is fantastic and in everyone's diary, so an awards ceremony would be good.

GH noted that the best fit for the area currently would be food and drink which would follow on from the Think Family project already started. There is a possibility of 'Local Food Hero' awards being built in to that.

(Leading in to **Agenda item 4. Quality Awards Concept**)

DJ asked what the group thought about bringing the food fairs/ festivals together ie Bolsover Food fest and the Great PD Fair. Also link together the DCC food and drink awards. Trying to pool the money would give higher quality events with major sponsorship and publicity.

(JO arrived)

(CC) The LSC Training Awards have similar tiers from local to regional and then national level.

JO also drew attention to the Godiva Awards [www.godiva-awards.com/](http://www.godiva-awards.com/) that are sponsored business awards with high publicity.

TW made it clear that the regional awards could not be closed to those that do not win at local level. GH said it would be impossible to 'feed' the local winners in to the regional anyway as it would be too restrictive. Eg B&B of the year for the national awards has to be a minimum 4 star with accolades. At local level it would give those with no accolades or a lower star rating a chance to win an award for their efforts. The awards are open to all who fit the criteria and we can have no influence over that as they feed in to the Enjoy England Excellence National Awards.

DJ asked the group if it was logical to bring the food festivals/ fairs together and perhaps take it to the board.

JO – If a PR and events company organised a good quality high profile event it would be great PR for the area. AC said that there is events management within the university. TW said that the PD area is only focused on for the awards and it needs to reach the whole county.

The AA Food Rosette Workshops are already being publicised for this year and have featured in the Caterer. Date for PD&D yet to be agreed with the AA.

*Action: GH to include Caterer web link with minutes*

(JO) Statistics show that EM area has a bad reputation for food and drink. It was noted by the group that there are several food rosettes awarded in the area. GH said that the Quality Champions would include such businesses to get more PR.

(DE) Derbyshire Times or another local quality publication could do a regular local food slot to increase awareness. TW suggested a bi-annual magazine similar to 'Heart' magazine.

DJ noted that this could be something to include in the new trade newsletter being produced which he then gave an overview of.

*Action: All agreed that the idea combining the food and drink awards with general tourism awards should be taken to the board by DJ.*

### **Quality assurance standards**

There is a tourism cluster in Bolsover that do not yet feel part of VPD&D which DE thought should be approached for the awards and visited by the DMP. Some are not quality assured.

*Action: GH offered to attend a Bolsover cluster meeting regarding quality and awards. DE to pass on the details and see if it would be possible.*

TW said that the size of rooms is still worrying participants in the QA schemes that they will lose a star. AC said that the standards could be too restrictive sometimes and the main question visitors ask is if the accommodation is fit for purpose. GH had recently attended a QIT update meeting and had raised this issue amongst others and is awaiting the feedback from the day.

The new schemes are being promoted more by VB in national press advertisements and also in leaflets being given out at TIC's which have also been made available online in the accommodation area of VPD.com at:  
[www.visitpeakdistrict.com/html/accommodation/?PHPSESSID=4411e8b11cd3f68cdd729c33dc4b5386](http://www.visitpeakdistrict.com/html/accommodation/?PHPSESSID=4411e8b11cd3f68cdd729c33dc4b5386)

The 'Local Tourism Business' section of VPD.com will feature a glossary of terms and other useful reference in the future including DDA, Fire Regulations and a template for an accessibility statement.

*Action: GH to lobby VB through this group about future issues relating to QA.*

#### **b) SB Feedback from current year**

Information copied from email with apologies:

I was going to say that the project has been progressing well overall, disappointing numbers on some of the dates, especially topics such as Welcome All, which is so important for the industry. Will need to co-ordinate further on TIC specific training dependent on funding sources. Year end figures to agree and finalise as a matter of urgency. Now need to plan phase II drawing in ideas from the feedback that we have received so far.

JD Confirmed the above and was pleased to have exceeded targets for Derbyshire in this financial year. Target was 64 and now has engaged with 73 businesses, mostly of which are micro-businesses. That is not to say that she would not still visit interested businesses and looks forward to focusing again on Derbyshire in the new financial year. People 1<sup>st</sup> can support non-certificated training and there is a lot of interest currently in the website development courses being held.

*Action: JD to pass actualy figures to GH for the next meeting*

### **3. Quality Champions**

EMT employed a PR representative to help promote the quality agenda in the EM. Part of this is for the Quality Managers to source good ambassadors for their area and for quality. This can be accommodation, food, retail or any tourism related business that promotes the area well from a good quality business. Local Food Hero also links in to this.

*Action: GH to attach Underleigh House as a Quality Champion example.*

#### **(4. Quality Awards Concept- discussed during item 2)**

### **5. Any other business**

**Training:** TW expressed that IT training was very popular at the moment and AC suggested culinary skills. It was discussed whether to ask a retailer or publican on to the panel. AC enforced that we should think outside the box and courses don't necessarily work. We need to promote customer service more.

**Customer Care:** Something to look at in the future is a mystery shopper system. (JO) Derby hotels are starting work on this already in the Business Development plan for DC. The best customer experience could be asked for in the press. GH suggested this may be something to consider for a competition on the VPD.com in the future.

### **6. Dates of future meetings**

All meetings take place between 2pm and 4pm

Next meeting: May 3 – Hardwick Hall

Venues TBA

*Action All: Please advise GH if you would be able to host any of these meetings*

Wednesday 27 June

Tuesday 4 September

Friday 9 November