



Good evening and thank you so much for taking the time to come along tonight. My thanks to Mitch, Laura and the Rockfish Team for hosting this event.

I would just like to explain how we got to this point:

I was recently involved with the £5 million South West Tourism Growth Fund, set up to target and grow the international market to the South West. Currently 54% of all international visitor spend is London based.

International visitors typically stay longer and spend more than domestic visitors so they are an increasingly important target market.

Currently 14% of the English Riviera's total 4.6 million visitors are international, this compares to 10% for Devon as a whole, but this has remained fairly static over recent years.

One of the reasons for this is that all regional destinations are finding it increasingly harder to compete with London, with the Olympics and Golden Jubilee celebrations further increasing London's global appeal.

In response to the increasing 'London challenge,' earlier this year the government launched a new 3 year, £40 million fund called the **Discover England fund**, with its key purpose to further support the growth of one of England's most successful export industries, **inbound tourism**.

The value of inbound tourism is forecast to grow from **£21bn** in **2013** to **£57bn** by **2025**, at a rate of 6% per year, twice that forecast for Domestic Tourism.

I am delighted to say that the ERTC, supported by the TDA was successful in bidding into round one of this fund, with a new project called: **England's Seafood Coast**. There were over 180 applications so to be one of just 16 national projects awarded the fund, is a significant achievement for Torbay.

International consumer research has identified that what we need to do, to attract more international visitors, is to strengthen our existing tourism offer and to develop and promote more world class visitor experiences.

Increasingly, local food is ranked higher and higher in importance by international visitors in choosing their destination. Right next door we land the most valuable catch in the country with over 40 varieties of fish and seafood exported across the world.



Brixham Fish Market is a world class USP.

The early morning Brixham Fish Market Tours are already an amazing authentic visitor experience which have attracted many international journalist visits and have been promoted as one of the Top 10 Things to Do in England by VisitBritain.

The challenge now is can we do more tours, can we better promote them and can customers book, pay, research and review online?

The government is looking for us to become **totally digitally savvy**. Bookability and online accessibility is our future to international markets.

The England's Seafood Coast Project

Was inspired by Mitch, who passionately believes the Riviera, can become a high profile international **seafood destination**.

I totally support Mitch's vision and also believe there is enormous potential for this project to provide a catalyst to develop a range of exciting NEW 'Seafood Coast' visitor experiences, products and packages to attract more visitors to the area.

Potentially the England's Seafood Coast brand could be very strong.

Future visitor experiences could include new seafood festivals, and or an increased range of activities, including guided walks, safaris, trails and fishing trips including reinstating 'Mussels by Moonlight' building on the success of the Fish Market Tours and the annual Fishstock Festival.

Combine all of these with our amazing coastal location which offers a growing number of quality restaurants serving local fish and seafood, with great places to stay and things to do and we will put ourselves in a very strong position to draw visitors from London.

Over the next few months Rebecca Davies from the Torbay Development Agency will be working with me as Project Coordinator and businesses right across Torbay, including producers, distributors, users and promoters of the current seafood catch, to map the partnership opportunities available to us as a leading coastal destination.

In addition we will be supporting a sister Discover England Fund project called: 'Amazing Experiences and Making Memories' managed by the South West Coast Path. Zoe is here with us tonight from the South West Coast Path and our



association will include the development of a New **England's Seafood Coast Walking Trail** which will be promoted internationally.

This round one Seafood Coast Project is to be delivered by March 2017 so the timetable is challenging. We are looking forward to working with you, with our eye, closely **on a possible larger stage 2 funding bid in 2017. Our success in securing additional funds** will depend on how many 'quick wins' we deliver for VisitBritain in this first stage.

We can't do this on our own; we need your help, cooperation and ambition to make an exciting new project like this deliver for Torbay. **Just think about what the Jurassic Coast brand has done for Dorset?**

Over the next 5 months we will be staging a series of England's Seafood Coast Events with the next on November 24th at Berry Head Hotel, titled **Creative Coastline**. Everyone is **welcome, so please look out for further details**.

Before I hand you over to Mitch, can I ask that you share with us during the evening **'light bulb moments'** that you have to help us develop this project. Around the room Becky has placed some pens for you to use. We would really appreciate if you could leave us your 'Fish Notes' as Becky has called them on the paper table clothes, compliments of Rockfish.

Over to you Mitch, enjoy your evening!