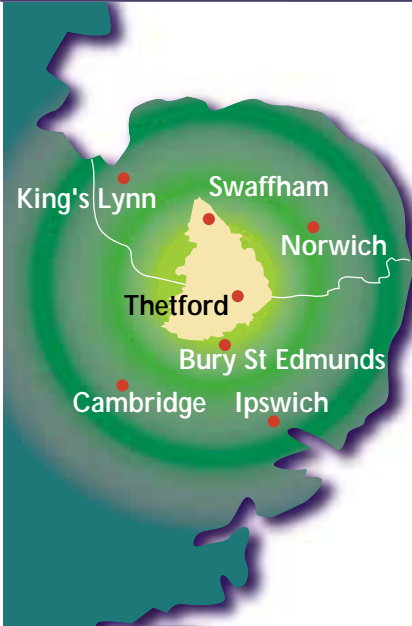




The Brecks

Making Tracks

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE BRECKS TOURISM PARTNERSHIP



Brecks Tourism Partnership looks to sustain its future

The Brecks Tourism Partnership Steering Group has been looking at how it should sustain its future.

The present Sustainable Tourism Project is now half way through its term and comes to an end at the end of 2005. To carry on the successful work that has been started, and in order for us to successfully apply for new funding, we must act now to investigate all the options available to us.

One option which has already been discussed is to move the Partnership to a Limited Company and then apply for Charitable Status.

A working party from the Steering Group involving Vanessa Scott (Strattons Hotel) Lord Iveagh (Elveden) John Flowerdew (Cranford House B&B) and Iain Dunnett (Suffolk County Council) is working on this project.

A report on the BTP's future status and sources of funding has been commissioned by an independent consultant. This

will be presented to the Brecks Tourism Partnership Annual General Meeting on Wednesday 29th September at 10.30 in the Cedar Room, Elveden Hall, Elveden (by kind permission of Lord Iveagh). Members will have an opportunity to give their feedback and agree the way forward.

As a first step in developing a strong structure, we are inviting all contacts on our database to sign up as Brecks Tourism Partnership members. The BTP currently has a loose structure and no membership fee. The generation of income to continue the project is one area which the consultant's report will address.

Following a membership fee survey last year, we were encouraged that many of you confirmed that you would be willing to pay an annual membership fee at some stage in the future. Please note that no membership fee will be imposed before 2006. All members will be consulted regarding any future fee structure.

In the meantime, we need more members to take an active role as Steering Group Members and possibly as Directors/Trustees of the new organisation. If you feel that you have the time and interest in being involved in promoting the Brecks as a leading sustainable visitor destination, please contact Lynne Finnigan Tel 01842 760116 or email lynne.finnigan@et.suffolkcc.gov.uk for an informal chat.

The BTP would particularly like to thank John Flowerdew of Cranford House Bed and Breakfast for his valuable support in sustaining the future of the BTP.

We particularly need the support of tourism businesses to make this happen!

A c t i o n :

Please complete the enclosed Membership / BTP Steering Group form and confirm that you are able to join us at the AGM on Wednesday 29th September at 10.30am and return in the enclosed FREEPOST envelope.

New Bus - Brecks Warrener makes the connection

The Brecks Warrener bus service has been launched and connects Thetford (railway station for transfers to mainline rail network), Brandon and Lakenheath calling at several major attractions. These include High Lodge Forest Centre, Brandon Country Park, Weeting Heath Visitor Centre and the RSPB Reserve at Lakenheath. The service will run daily until 12th September and at weekends only until the end of October. For further information contact Marlene Wiseman on 01842 816176



NOW OPEN- THETFORD TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRE



4 White Hart Street,
Thetford, IP24 1AD
Tel no: 01842 820689
Email address:
info@thetfordtourism.co.uk
Website address:
www.explorethetford.co.uk
Opening hours:
10am - 4pm
Monday to Saturday

Brecks Visitor Guide and Brecks Browser



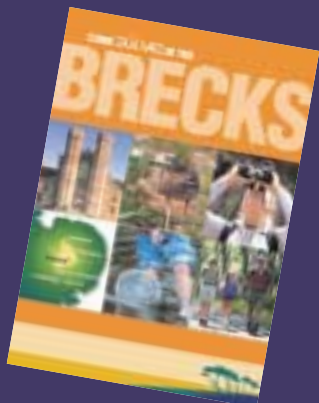
90,000 copies of the new "Come Alive in the Brecks" Visitor Guide have been distributed throughout the UK and overseas. The new visitor guides and the browser were distributed throughout the Brecks to graded accommodation providers and attractions in time for the February Half Term week. We are delighted that feedback from both visitors and tourism businesses has been excellent for both the visitor guide and the browsers. Please let us know when you need more copies of the visitor guides for your guests.

Action

Do you need more copies of the new free 'Come Alive in the Brecks' Visitor Guide? Please contact Brecks Tourism on 01842 760116



Lord Iveagh at the launch of the 'Come Alive in the Brecks' Visitor Guide at Go Ape



A Taste of the Brecks



170 guests attended a Brecks Local Produce Taster Event at Lynford Hall Country Hotel on 19th May. The objective of the event was to introduce local producers of food and tourism services to hotels, bed and breakfasts, visitor attractions and restaurants.

The event attracted 15 local food producers and Bike Art (cycle hire and sales). Guests sampled and bought cheeses, olives, venison sausages, fish, beer and ales and much more.

A local produce lunch was enjoyed by guests and this was followed by a prize draw of a local produce hamper, the contents of which were donated by the exhibitors. The winner of the hamper was Mrs Brenda Howlett of Little Abbey Farm, Pentney.

BBC's Look East attended the event which received lengthy coverage during their Regional News programme.

Action

Please consider using more locally grown produce on your menus

Every year, a National Big Draw is organised for the month of October. This year this is being linked into the BBC's new "Natural History of The British Isles" series which is being screened around this time. The BBC have asked those working in the countryside and natural history sectors to look at providing events and activities in the themes of their programmes so that these can be highlighted on the BBC's website which

BRECKS RECIPE

Grilled chicken, asparagus, mint and chilli salad

(recipe courtesy of Ellen Jolly)

250g asparagus (trimmed) available beginning May to mid June and grown by WO & PO Jolly, Roudham Farm
 4 boneless chicken breast fillets (skinned and halved) available from Longwood Organic Farm
 Olive oil available from Daniella's Delicatessen
 Fresh lemon juice
 1 red chilli (de-seeded and finely chopped)
 3 tablespoons mint leaves – from your own garden
 Salad greens – from your own garden

Place the 8 pieces of chicken in a bowl and pour over 2 tablespoons of olive oil, 1 tablespoon lemon juice and half of the chopped red chilli. Turn to coat and leave for 1-2 hours to marinade.

Shortly before serving, season the chicken with salt and pepper then place under the pre-heated grill for 4-6 minutes on each side (depending on thickness) until cooked through.

Meanwhile, cook the asparagus in boiling salted water for 2-3 minutes or until just tender (again, this will depend on thickness), then refresh briefly under running cold water.

Place the salad greens in a large bowl and add the roughly torn mint leaves. In a screw-top jar, shake together 3 tablespoons of oil, 1 tablespoon lemon juice, the remaining chilli and plenty of salt and pepper.

To serve, toss the dressing through the salad, top with the warm asparagus and the grilled chicken, serve at once. Yummy!

Fairgreen Farm showing a wonderful display of their blueberry products at Taster Event



Big Draw in the Brecks!

will be promoted at the end of each of their programmes. This will be a great opportunity for the Brecks to secure coverage of our events on the BBC's website.

The Brecks Countryside Project are aiming to stimulate events and activities based on the Big Draw throughout the area. A quick and easy way to achieve this would be to include thick card and crayons in bird hides for the "Big

Brecks Bird Draw" or organise a Big Draw event for Big Draw Day on 16th October. To be included in the Big Draw publicity, your programme will need to be submitted to the BCP by 15th July.

For further information please contact Abby at the Brecks Countryside project on 01842 761569
 Email: Brecks.project@et.suffolkcc.gov.uk

Brecks Tourism businesses gain Green Tourism Awards



10 tourism businesses each gained the prestigious Green Tourism Business Scheme Award in March 2004. The scheme was delivered in partnership with the East of England Tourist Board. An assessor visited each of the businesses and carried out a detailed audit of a range of areas such as energy saving, water, purchasing, local produce and transport and wildlife. Marks were achieved in each category and the combined total indicated the level of award received.



Green Tourism Business Award Winners receive their plaques from Mike Dowdall

Mike Dowdall of the EETB presented a plaque to each of the award winners at the Local Produce Taster Event. They were:

GOLD

Manor Farm B&B
Miriam Thomas and Trevor Mason
Greenbanks Country Hotel & Restaurant *Jenny Lock*

SILVER

Lynford Hall Country Hotel
Anna Richmond;
Bike Art
Paul Hill

BRONZE

Broom Hall Country Hotel
Simon Rowling
The Vines B&B *Mike Woolnough*
Oxburgh Hall *Michael Rooney*

Home Farm B&B

Valerie & John Dove
West Stow Country Park and Anglo Saxon Village
Christine White
International League for the Protection of Horses
Linda Hams

New Where to Stay, Events and Local Products



A series of three new leaflets are to be published in the summer. These will provide information on Where to Stay, Events and Local Products. The Where to Stay guide will include details of graded accommodation including B&Bs, hotels, self-catering, and caravan and camping sites. The leaflets will supplement the Brecks Visitor Guide and will be distributed to all members when available.

Action

Have you recently achieved an ETC, AA or RAC quality grading, or have you applied for a grading? if so contact Brecks Tourism and let us know.

FREE Seminar - Quality Awareness Day - Learn about the Diamond Grading Scheme - 5th October

12 Brecks bed and breakfasts which have not participated in the Quality Scheme have an opportunity to attend a Seminar run by the EETB this autumn. What is quality? Who defines it? Is it too costly for me? Does it mean I have to spend a lot of money in my property just to become graded? All of these issues will be covered and much more on Tuesday 5th October at Manor Farm B&B at Great Hockham.

The Brecks Tourism Partnership is funding the cost of the Seminar to enable non-graded accommodation providers to find out more about the scheme and dispel many of the myths that surround it. A deposit of £10 per person will be refunded after the event.

Please note that the timings have been organised around your needs to provide breakfasts and possible

evening meals. A light lunch is provided at the Seminar.

We do hope that you will join us for what should be a really interesting and, dare we say, fun event.

Action:
Complete the enclosed registration form and return in the FREEPOST envelope.
First come first served!

Accommodation in the Brecks

The Brecks Tourism Partnership Steering Group, at their meeting at Gooderstone Water Gardens on Thursday 10th June decided, after a lengthy debate, that they would promote only graded accommodation or those accommodation providers that have applied for a grading through the ETC, AA or RAC.

However, it was also agreed that non-graded accommodation providers would receive the full range of support services from the BTP including raising an awareness of the grading scheme, training and events.

Events in the Brecks - Summer 2004

Weeting Steam Rally

16-18 JULY Tel 01842 810317 www.weetingrally.co.uk

In Concert at High Lodge Forest Centre, Thetford

Sugababes 31ST JULY

Fun Lovin' Criminals, 1ST AUGUST

Tickets can be purchased on 01842 814612

Mildenhall Cycle Festival

28TH-30TH AUGUST www.mildenhallrally.org.uk

Swoffham Arts Week

17-24TH SEPTEMBER Tel 01760 724741

Oxburgh Hall

A range of events for the whole family including evening concerts are held throughout the summer. For an Oxburgh Hall Events

2004 programme Tel 01366 328258 email

oxburgh@nationaltrust.org.uk www.nationaltrust.org.uk

Brecks Tourism Partnership AGM -

The Way Forward

WEDNESDAY 29TH SEPTEMBER at 10.30am, Cedar Room,

Elveden Hall, Elveden.

Heathland events organised by the Brecks

Countryside Project - FREE

SUNDAY 18TH JULY - Cranwich Camp - Chalk grassland old and new
4 miles walk - 2pm-4.30pm

FRIDAY 17TH SEPTEMBER - Brandon Park Heath

Heathland 'Wisdom Play' 6pm-8pm

SUNDAY 10TH OCTOBER - Heathlands of the western Brecks

10 miles cycle ride 10am-1pm

SUNDAY 7TH NOVEMBER - The Peddars Way to Middle Harling Heath
6 miles walk - 10am-1pm

For further details or to book a place please call 01842 761569
or email brecks.project@et.suffolkcc.gov.uk. Sturdy
footwear recommended.

Ecotech - Merry Wives of Windsor

2.30PM SATURDAY 10TH JULY

Tickets £6 adult £4 children £5.50 concs. Family ticket
£18. Strawberry fayre pastries, wines and ales available.

Tel 01760 726100 www.roughcast.co.uk

Brecks Awareness Days

4 Brecks Awareness Days have now been held with over 60 attending these events. All delegates who have attended the programme have found the programme useful and an opportunity to meet other tourism businesses.

All delegates have agreed that they didn't realise how special the Brecks was and the variety of things to do and see which was on their doorstep.

Action

Free - Register now for Brecks Awareness Days. Morning coffee, lunch, afternoon tea and guided coach tour are all included. Complete the enclosed nomination form and return in FREEPOST envelope.

TUESDAY 28TH SEPTEMBER - Lackford Lakes

WEDNESDAY 20TH OCTOBER - Gooderstone Water Gardens

Brecks competition attracts massive response



A massive 6,500 entries have been received for a competition to visit the Brecks. The competition featured in a double-page spread in YOURS magazine in December 2003. Congratulations to Jill Brown from Colchester, Essex who visited the Brecks in May and our thanks to The Bell Hotel, Thetford, for offering 5 nights accommodation as part of the prize.

As a direct result of this media coverage there has been a significant number of enquiries and bookings at the Hotels and Bed and Breakfasts that participated in this media visit

by offering complimentary accommodation and services and were featured in the article.

Action

Would you like to offer complimentary accommodation for future journalist visits? Do you have any stories that might make an interesting Brecks press release?

Contact Victoria Brook at Brecks-appointed PR Agency, Shorthose-Russell on 01603 785765 or email victoriab@shorthose-russell.co.uk

A Member's view:

Everyone has heard of places such as the Lake District, Cotswolds, and the Norfolk Broads and can loosely define their location and characteristics. The Brecks is not yet easily recognisable. However, attitudes are now changing.

The Brecks Tourism and Brecks Countryside Project teams are responsible for promoting sustainable tourism in this very special area providing visitors with an environmentally attractive package on what to do and see in the Brecks.

The Brecks browser with leaflets covering heritage, flora and fauna, cultural and adventure activities is almost dauntingly comprehensive. The visitor is well informed and responsibly warned as to how to respect as well as enjoy this unique natural area.

I had the pleasure of attending a Brecks Awareness Day in March at The West Stow Anglo Saxon Village and Country Park. This attraction exemplified the

harmonious relationship of the character of the area and the manner of representing it. The visitor is enthused by the concern of especially qualified people who love and understand the landscape and wildlife.

The Local Produce Taster Event at Lynford Hall in May also highlighted and introduced me to the existence and excellent quality of a wide range of local produce. I have also valued the opportunity to meet other accommodation providers and tourism businesses at these events.

It may be hoped that the Brecks example of how to attract and service sympathetic tourism could be followed elsewhere. I would commend that you embrace this project for the benefit of your visitors and your business. I look forward to meeting you at future events.

**Alison Loughlin,
The Old Red Lion,
Castle Acre**

These projects were delivered as part of the Sustainable Tourism Project funded by:



The Brecks

BRECKS TOURISM PARTNERSHIP

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