

Putting Painswick Back on the Map

A new visitors' guide is poised to put Painswick back on the map this Spring.

Thousands of the full-colour leaflets are being distributed through tourist information centres across Gloucestershire and visitor hotspots in neighbouring counties along with an interactive PDF version for tourism and local business websites.

The new guide was commissioned by Gloucestershire First, the county-wide economic partnership, as part of a series of measures to support Painswick's traders who were badly hit by the six-month-long closure of the A46 due to a landslide caused by the summer floods.

Gloucestershire First, working in partnership with a number of organisations, used flood recovery funding from the South West of England Regional Development Agency to carry out face-to-face consultations with businesses and other bodies in the town.

Feedback was then used to put together a strategy to encourage visitors to return to Painswick, which included positive coverage in the local media and the new visitors' guide.

Chairman of Gloucestershire First, Chas Fellows, said he hoped the work carried out by the organisation would help the businesses in Painswick and surrounding area to rebuild.

"Many traders have responded positively and are keen to use the guide on their websites to promote the town and attract more visitors," said Mr Fellows, who is also leader of Stroud District Council. "This has been an excellent example of partnership working between Gloucestershire First, Stroud District Council, the Cotswold and Forest of Dean Destination Management Organisation, Painswick Parish Council, Gloucestershire Highways and local businesses."

Paul Moir of Painswick Rococo Garden said the support of Gloucestershire First during six months of difficult trading had been 'quite a morale booster'.

"They listened to what we wanted and produced the sorts of things businesses wanted to try to overcome the situation," he said. "The road closure was a ghastly and very stressful time for traders."

Local craftsman Dennis French, who spends hours of his spare time promoting Painswick by distributing leaflets around the county, said the new guide turned the spotlight on many of the town's charms.

"We are delighted with the new Painswick leaflet. It shows the area very well and visitors have already expressed approval," he said. Shelagh Hume of The Royal Oak in Painswick also welcomed the new guide. "I think it will help to bring people in," she said.

Terry Parker, the chairman of Painswick Parish Council, said the local business community was looking forward to attracting even more visitors to 'The Queen of the Cotswolds' in 2008. "Painswick Parish Council wishes to express the local community's appreciation for the time spent by Gloucestershire First in publicising Painswick, particularly during the very difficult period when the A46 was closed.

"The new leaflet produced by Gloucestershire First has been very well received."