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# Torquay Town Talk

## *Torbay Town Centres Company*

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## At your service - simply the best!

Torbay Town Centres Company (TTCCO) in partnership with the Torbay Development Agency and the Learning and Skills Council commissioned Skillsmart Retail to carry out their Location Model research into how our towns function, what our customers think about the towns and a mystery shopping survey of 100 retail stores across the three towns.

The official results of the whole town research and the individual retail results will be announced at an awards evening at the Imperial Hotel on 8th September.

The mystery shopping surveys were carried out by independent, professional assessors who work all over the UK making these assessments, as well as for some of the major, national retail chains.

They visited 50 stores in Torquay and 25 each in Paignton and Brixham. They judged against a whole range of criteria including: presentation both inside and outside the stores (first impressions); access to and in the stores; marketing and promotion - special offers, quality of the materials etc; customer service - did the staff acknowledge them when they entered the store, were they friendly and helpful, did

they know what they were selling, were they smart, clean and efficient and did they say thank you when they left the store?

Skillsmart retail have carried out 79 of these surveys across England now including such places as Cheltenham, Exeter, Poole, Nottingham, Cirencester etc.

Torquay has knocked Stratford upon Avon off the number one slot with 89.6% as an overall total. This is an incredible achievement. Of all the 79 towns and cities that have gone through this process Torquay has come out top for service.

Paignton and Brixham came in the top 20 at 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> respectively. With Paignton scoring 83% and Brixham 82.9%.

It is really great to have some very positive news for our town centres against all the gloom of the past year.

Congratulations to all the stores that put themselves forward for this scrutiny.

**Torquay is No1 for service in the UK - Its Official !**

## TTCCo Celebrates its 1<sup>st</sup> Birthday!!

Come and join our celebrations for our first birthday. Torbay Town Centres Company is holding its first AGM and a celebration of having been in existence for one year at 6pm on 22<sup>nd</sup> July at the Imperial Hotel.

We will be reporting on what we have achieved so far and what we plan to do in the next year including our plan to introduce the Torquay town centre Business Improvement District.

We shall also hear at first-hand what the new Tourism Strategy Review recommends to take this very important industry forwards in Torbay. Retail and tourism go hand in hand so it is very important that we understand how we can work together to make Torbay a first class destination for all our visitors. If you would like to come along please call us on 01803 212270 or email [torbaytowncentres@btconnect.com](mailto:torbaytowncentres@btconnect.com).



## Can we save you some money?

We are working with a company called BCRA (Business Cost Reduction Associates) and The Pavey Group to find ways to reduce your utility and insurance bills. This company recognises that UK businesses are being squeezed by increasing energy and utility costs. They can save you time and money finding you the best deals available for:

**Electricity**

**Water**

**Gas**

**Finance**

**Telecoms**

**Vehicle Leasing**

**Insurance**

**Staff HR issues**

All you need to supply is your most recent utility bill for them to scan all the options for your business to either save you money on a new contract or to give you the reassurance of knowing that you have the best deal

To receive a **FREE** cost reduction review for your business call 0844 824 3700 or email [info@bcraassociates.co.uk](mailto:info@bcraassociates.co.uk). and quote Torbay Town Centres Co.



## Small Business Rate Relief

Did you know that all business premises with a rateable value of less than £15000 are eligible for Small Business Rate relief? This is a government backed scheme to help small businesses that could save you up to 50% off your business rates bill. If you think your business may be entitled to this discount then contact Torbay Council on 01803 207207 or email [business.rates@torbay.gov.uk](mailto:business.rates@torbay.gov.uk).

They will provide you with the information about how to apply, the process is very simple and may save you £'s off your rates bill.



### Open all hours- If not when?

There is confusion about what stores opening hours should be. It is important for the sake of your customers that we have some consistency about when we are open for business in the town.

It would be great if we could decide on a uniform trading time.

At Christmas for instance what day do you want to have as the late shopping day and until what time? Will you open on Boxing Day or New Years Day?

Sunday and Bank holiday opening - what hours do you want to trade? How are we going to let the public know? Would you fill in the reply slip below so that we can get some consensus on this?

Name.....

Business.....

Email.....

Christmas opening will you be.....

Late night opening? Yes /No Starting when?.....

Which night of the week works best?.....Open until what time?.....pm

Open Boxing Day? Y/N Open New Years Day? Y/N if yes what hours? From ---am to ----pm

Do you open for Bank Holidays? Y/N if yes from ----am to -----pm



### Chew the Fat with your neighbours

The next Torquay Retail Networking Group will meet on September 2nd at 10.00 at the Primark Store in Union Street when we will be discussing the arrangements for Christmas and a review of the summer season.

At our last meeting the Head of Car Parks, Steve Hurley, came along to discuss car parking in general and to hear the concerns of traders in Torquay. He has offered to come to our meetings in future so that he can take back your ideas about how the parking service can work better for us all. Steve is also responsible for StoreNet and is happy to talk about those issues too.

If there is anything else you would like us to include on the agenda for this or future meetings let us know and we'll do our best to include it.

These are your meetings so please do come along if only to meet you colleagues over a cup of coffee.

I will come to the next Torquay Retail network Group please send me a reminder.

Name.....Business.....

Please stay in touch with us we are here to help you.

Give us a call on 01803 212270. Email [torbaytowncentres@btconnect.com](mailto:torbaytowncentres@btconnect.com)  
Torquay Town Centres Co Unit B the Market Forum (first floor) Market St, Torquay TQ1 3AE



## Torquay BID - Tell us what you want

You will know from earlier Newsletters and the media that we are looking to introduce a BID to Torquay town centre. We need to know from you as business people in the town what you think should be included in any future action plan. I would be most grateful if you could take some time to complete this questionnaire, to help us to include your views in the BID plan.

Your name? .....  
Your position.....  
Company Name .....  
Type of business (fashion, hairdresser, legal, restaurant etc).....  
Address.....  
Contact Phone number .....  
Contact email.....

If we introduce a BID to Torquay what additional services / facilities would you like to see here? Please indicate the improvements below that you would support as part of a BID and rank them 1 -15, 1 being the most important

	*Important?	Please rank
Cleaner Streets	Y/N	[ ]
Chewing gum removal	Y/N	[ ]
More litter bins	Y/N	[ ]
Recycling for trade waste	Y/N	[ ]
More Police	Y/N	[ ]
Night time crime reduction initiatives	Y/N	[ ]
Street wardens	Y/N	[ ]
Better marketing	Y/N	[ ]
High profile events	Y/N	[ ]
Business Support and Training	Y/N	[ ]
Improved directional signs	Y/N	[ ]
Public Art	Y/N	[ ]
More flowers/planting	Y/N	[ ]
Improved street furniture	Y/N	[ ]
Improved Christmas lights	Y/N	[ ]
*Please delete as applicable		

Any other initiatives you would like to see included in a potential Torquay BID scheme?

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Many thanks for completing this. Please return to: Lucy Ball Torbay Town Centres Co Unit B The Market Forum, Market St Torquay TQ13AE Tel/fax 01803212270, email: [torbaytowncentres@btconnect.com](mailto:torbaytowncentres@btconnect.com) OR give us a call and we will collect it from you and answer any questions you may have about the Torquay BID scheme.