

CULTURE RECREATION & TOURISM CABINET MEMBER MEETING

Agenda Item 81

Brighton & Hove City Council

Subject:	Proposal to introduce a 'Greeter Scheme' to the city		
Date of Meeting:	February 10th 2009		
Report of:	Director of Cultural Services		
Contact Officer:	Name:	Liz Brand	Tel: 29-2602
	E-mail:	Liz.brand@brighton-hove.gov.uk	
Key Decision:	No		
Wards Affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 The 2008 Tourism Strategy makes a specific recommendation for the implementation of a Greeter scheme. Specifically it would improve visitor experience, improve visitor welcome, engage local people in the benefit of tourism and increase take up of local public transport.
- 1.2 Introducing the scheme to the City supports the objective 'Protecting the environment while growing the economy' from the City Council corporate plan as detailed in the Corporate Plan.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 To instruct the Destination Manger to undertake detailed research on implementing a 'Greeter Scheme' within the city, and present the detailed options to a Cabinet Member Meeting during summer 2009.

3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION/CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS:

- 3.1 A 'Greeter Scheme' is a voluntary scheme which welcomes visitors to the city in a unique way, by recruiting local residents who are passionate and knowledgeable about the city to volunteer and conduct free tours.
- 3.2 Cities with a similar scheme include New York City, New York; Chicago, Illinois; Fairbanks, Alaska; Toronto, Canada; Melbourne, Australia; Houston, Texas Buenos Aires, Argentina, Paris France, The Hague and Thanet, Kent. They form part of the Global Greeter Network who abide by a code of conduct. Founded in 1992 in New York City as the first "welcome visitor" program of its kind in the United States, the idea grew

from friendly exchanges its founder had with people she met on her own vacation travels around the world.

- 3.3 'The Big Apple Greeter' has welcomed more than 75,000 visitors from all 50 states and 124 countries, with visits conducted in 22 languages. A December 2004 survey conducted by New York University Tisch Centre for Hospitality, Tourism and Sports Management found that 97% of survey respondents said that their Greeter experience made their trips to New York City much more successful and enjoyable.
- 3.4 The scheme will involve recruiting enthusiastic, friendly, and city knowledgeable residents to volunteer their time and expertise to welcome visitors by way of a walking tour, in groups of 6 or less.
- 3.5 Visitors would access details of the scheme on www.visitbrighton.com, and book the 'Greet' before they arrive in the city. Tours would be 2-4 hours and would start at a convenient meeting point to the 'Greet'. We will use the Visitor Information Centre for all 'Greet's' in the centre of the city, which will also make visitors more aware of the service the centre provides.
- 3.6 The 'Greeters' would prepare the tour and areas to explore based upon the interests of the visitor or areas of the city they are knowledgeable and passionate about. This service is in no way is designed to replace the 'Blue Badge Tours' provided by qualified and experienced guides, but enhance the welcome in the city by knowledgeable and friendly ambassadors. We will actively seek to encourage the visitors to use the blue badge tours to access their detailed expertise on the city.
- 3.7 There are many advantages of this scheme for visitors as well as for the city. An example is schemes such as these promote use of public transport by visitors, spread the spending power of visitors into local neighbourhoods and allow residents to show their pride for the place in which they live.
- 3.8 Prior to launch, and as part of the marketing campaign we would look to utilise our press contacts to get as much publicity for the scheme as possible, with coverage in local and national press as well as specialist tourism publications.
- 3.9 We will be looking to secure funding for the launch of the scheme from a variety of sources including regional tourist boards, European funding and any other appropriate funding streams.

4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 We are in discussions with other 'Greeter Schemes' across the world, having experienced both Thanet Greeters in Kent and Chicago Greeters, USA and have met with the relevant Authority's / Organisations responsible for setting them up in an effort to gain information about introducing the scheme to Brighton & Hove.

5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

There are no direct financial implications from the report itself. It is however anticipated that there will be a financial assessment of the major options when they are reported to Cabinet in due course. In particular more information is required concerning set-up and running costs and expected levels of external funding

Finance Officer Consulted: Peter Francis Date: 17/12/08

5.1 Legal Implications:

There are no immediate legal implications arising from this report.

Lawyer Consulted: Bob Bruce Date: 23/12/08

5.2 Equalities Implications:

We would look to work with 'Greeters' and visitors from a diverse range regardless of disability, sexuality, age, beliefs, religion, and will actively work with the Disabled Federation with regard to volunteers, and to promote the scheme to disabled visitors.

5.3 Sustainability Implications:

The scheme would encourage visitors to discover and explore parts of the city which they otherwise may not have access to, this will always be on foot (or using public transport) and will benefit the local businesses in these areas.

5.4 Crime & Disorder Implications:

There are none.

5.5 Risk & Opportunity Management Implications:

There are none.

5.6 Corporate / Citywide Implications:

Protect the environment whilst growing the economy.
By setting up a 'Greeter Scheme', in line with the 2008 Refreshed Strategy for the Visitor Economy, and joining the Global Greeter Network, this will open up a new marketing channel for VisitBrighton and encourage more visitors to visit the city. This will bring together visitors and residents in a dynamic way and fosters understanding from both sides. Brighton & Hove will be the only city in the UK to have the scheme, reinforcing the city as a unique and cultural destination.

6. EVALUATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S):

6.1 There are none.

7. REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 In order to continue to develop the 'destination brand' for Brighton and Hove, the implementation of the 'Greeter Scheme' will provide a framework for progressing the 2008 Refreshed Strategy for the Visitor Economy, whilst working closely with key city priorities.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

Below are screen shots from the website of the 'Big Apple Greeter' explaining how the scheme works, how it was set up, how to access the scheme as a visitor and how to volunteer.

The screenshot shows a Windows Internet Explorer browser window displaying the website for 'Big Apple Greeter - New York City'. The browser's address bar shows 'http://www.bigapplegreeter.org/'. The website features a navigation menu with links for 'Home', 'Contact us', 'Site Map', 'Meet a New Yorker', and 'Make a Donation'. The main content area is divided into several sections:

- Left Sidebar (Teal):** Contains a navigation menu with links: 'What is Big Apple Greeter?', 'How can I spend time with a New Yorker?', 'What is the Access Program?', 'How do I become a volunteer?', 'How can I support Big Apple Greeter?', and 'Resources'. At the bottom is an 'AltaVista Babel Fish' translation tool with flags for various languages.
- Center (Yellow):** Features a photograph of a New York City street. Text reads: 'See New York through the eyes of a New Yorker! A volunteer Greeter will show you a favorite neighborhood, answer your questions and demonstrate how easy it is to use public transportation. And it's FREE, too.' Below this is the 'global greeter network' logo.
- Right (Yellow):** Titled 'Friendly-Welcoming-Unique MAKE NEW YORK YOUR OWN!'. It includes a testimonial: 'The winter morning we met our Greeter was cold and chilly. We went into HIS neighborhoods with him. That was so exciting. Now New York reminds us of the warmhearted program of Big Apple Greeter.' A photo of Naoki and Aika from Japan is shown. Below the testimonial is a list of links: 'Greeter for a Day', 'Hall of Fame', 'Make a Donation', 'Neighborhood Profiles & Walking Itineraries', and 'Visitors Request Form'.

The browser's taskbar at the bottom shows the 'Internet' icon.

ABOUT BIG APPLE GREETER - Windows Internet Explorer provided by Brighton and Hove City Council

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Address http://www.bigapplegreeter.org/01-big_apple/00-what_is.html Go Links >>

Home | Contact us | Site Map | Meet a New Yorker | Make a Donation



Big Apple Greeter

New York City

What is Big Apple Greeter?

About Big Apple Greeter

Our newsletter

Special events

In the press

Contact us

Site map

How can I spend time with a New Yorker?

What is the Access Program?

How do I become a volunteer?

How can I support Big Apple Greeter?

Resources

About Big Apple Greeter

Founded in 1992 as the first "welcome visitor" program of its kind in the United States, the idea grew from friendly exchanges Founder Lynn Brooks had with people she met on her own vacation travels around the world. Lynn realized that New York City suffered from an image problem: almost everyone she spoke to wanted to visit New York City, but thought the city was too dangerous, expensive and overwhelming. Lynn wanted the world to know New York City as she did: a great big small town with diverse neighborhoods, mom-and-pop stores, fun places to dine, and friendly residents who go out of their way to help an out-of-towner feel welcome.



Today, there are about 300 volunteer Greeters who bring visitors to neighborhoods in New York City, and 30 volunteers who work in **Big Apple Greeter's** office in every aspect of the program, from answering visitors' questions and matching visitors with Greeters, to computer tech support and special events. Since its start in 1992, Big Apple Greeter has welcomed more than 75,000 visitors from all 50 states and 124 countries, with visits conducted in 22 languages. A December 2004 [survey](#) conducted by New York University Tisch Center for Hospitality, Tourism and Sports Management found that 97% of survey respondents said that their Greeter experience made their trips to New York City much more successful.

Big Apple Greeter -- Meet A New Yorker - Windows Internet Explorer provided by Brighton and Hove City Council

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Address http://www.bigapplegreeter.org/02-how_spend/00-how_spend.html Go Links >>

Home | Contact us | Site Map | Meet a New Yorker | Make a Donation



Big Apple Greeter

New York City

What is Big Apple Greeter?

How can I spend time with a New Yorker?

Meet a New Yorker

Visit Request Form

Visitor FAQ

What to expect

Know before you go

What is the Access Program?

How do I become a volunteer?

How can I support Big Apple Greeter?

Resources

Meet a New Yorker

Big Apple Greeter is a non-profit organization that matches visitors with friendly and enthusiastic New Yorkers who are happy to share the city they love. A wonderful experience for families, friends and individuals traveling solo, Greeters help travelers feel welcome and get more from their stay in the Big Apple.



Big Apple Greeter's services are offered **FREE OF CHARGE**, and there is a **NO TIPPING POLICY**.

The New Yorkers who serve as Greeters are all volunteers, come from varied backgrounds and can welcome visitors in 22 languages. The office staff, also mostly volunteers, matches Greeters to visitors according to language, neighborhoods requested, and interests, when possible.

Big Apple Greeter welcomes all visitors without regard to race, color, creed, gender, age, sexual orientation, marital status or disability.

■ **Submit your request to meet a Greeter by filling in the [Visit Request Form](#).**

Photo: Marcus Reidenberg


BAG- How do I become a volunteer - Windows Internet Explorer provided by Brighton and Hove City Council

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help

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Address http://www.bigapplegreeter.org/04-become_volunteer/00-become_volunteer.html Go Links >>

Home | Contact us | Site Map | Meet a New Yorker | Make a Donation



Big Apple Greeter

New York City

What is Big Apple Greeter?

How can I spend time with a New Yorker?

What is the Access Program?

How do I become a volunteer?

Become a volunteer

Volunteers with disabilities

Volunteer FAQ

Job descriptions

Volunteer applications

How can I support Big Apple Greeter?

Resources


Become a volunteer

Do you love New York City? Then why not help visitors love it too?

If you love New York City, enjoy meeting people from around the world and would like to share with visitors a New Yorker's New York, **Big Apple Greeter** has just the volunteer opportunity for you!

Many first-time and even repeat visitors to our city are intimidated by its size. Big Apple Greeter volunteers welcome visitors to all five boroughs and show them that "the big city" really *can* have small town charm.

- Visitors request specific neighborhoods they'd like to see, or leave the neighborhood up to the Greeter.
- A Greeter takes a visitor on an informal, unscripted walk through neighborhoods the Greeter knows well.
- Greeters share personal stories and favorite spots.
- We encourage visitors to experience diverse neighborhoods in all 5 boroughs.
- Your knowledge of any ethnic areas and off the beaten track neighborhoods is a plus.



"I love to show off New York City! Being a Greeter means I get to meet people from all around the world and share my love for this great city".

Mathew

http://www.bigapplegreeter.org/04-become_volunteer/04-job_description.html Internet

Documents In Members' Rooms

1.

Background Documents

1.