

WREXHAM TOURISM FORUM

**Minutes of meeting held on Monday 28th September 2009
Canolfan Catrin Finch Centre, Glyndwr University, Wrexham**

Present:

Chris Henshaw	CH WCBC - Tourism & Communications Officer
David Powell	DP WCBC - Tourism & Marketing Officer
Daryl Shaw	DS Rossett Hall Hotel
Ray Squire	RS Driven by Q
Father Brignall	FB St Marys Cathedral
Greg Pearn	GP Techniquest
Hadyn Hughes	HH Glyndwr University
Sandra Millar	SM Ramada Plaza Hotel
Sue Kelly	SK Open Church Network
Mike Kagan	MK Cross Lanes Hotel
Julie Johnson	JJ Johnson Basket Makers (Bangor-on-Dee TIP)
Sarah Bolton	SB Grosvenor Hotel & Spa
Allan Forrest	AF WCBC - NMC Manager
Mike Bather	MB WCBC - Business Counsellor

Apologies:

Bryn Hughes	Ceiriog Country Holidays
Gwynneth Forrester	Gresford TIP
Martin Pinfold	Chirk TIP
Michelle Kozomara	British Waterways

		Action
1.	<p><u>Welcome and Apologies</u></p> <p>DS welcomed everyone around the table. A round the table introduction was held. DS explained the new format of the forum.</p> <p>DS informed the group of the passing away of Pat Bannon and paid tribute to the support she gave to the forum.</p>	
2.	<p><u>Business Support</u></p> <p>MB gave a general overview of what services the Business Support team of WCBC can offer the tourism trade including funding, grants and general support.</p> <p>MK asked MB to explain what was meant by the term 'account managed'. MB explained that he is the gateway for the forum to access the services provided by the Business Support team. DS asked if groups such as WTF were eligible for certain types of funding and support. MB confirmed that businesses were eligible.</p>	

3.	<p><u>Wrexham Council Tourism Team- who's who?</u></p> <p>CH clarified that there had been some changes within the tourism and marketing section at WCBC, with Colin Hyde departing and Karen Whitney-Lang being appointed as Regeneration and Tourism Manager. CH and DP explained what their roles were within the tourism section.</p> <p>MK asked for an organisational chart of the tourism section to be circulated with the minutes of the meeting. (see attached)</p> <p>DS thanked Colin Hyde and Nia Hollins for their past work with the tourism forum.</p>	DP
4.	<p><u>Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal- World Heritage Success</u></p> <p>CH gave an update on what the situation was regarding the World Heritage success. CH explained that a concerted marketing push would get underway once issues like car parking provision at the site had been addressed. CH also informed the group that work was being carried out to develop and brand public transport links to the site from bus, train services etc.</p> <p>DS requested a web-link be sent to members of the forum to enable them to link their business websites to information about the aqueduct.</p> <p>The WCBC website information is being updated and CH will circulate the link once the new pages are online.</p> <p>DS thanked Dr Dawn Roberts, Divisional Manager, Economic Development, WCBC for her hard work in leading the World Heritage status bid for the aqueduct and canal.</p>	CH
5.	<p><u>Rural Development Plan- potential projects</u></p> <p>AF talked to the group regarding RDP funding. AF explained that this was a chance for the forum to try and tap into the funding by submitting an 'expression of interest' outlining a potential project. Submissions will need to be in by end of November.</p> <p>CH suggested tapping into world heritage status as a possible project, or developing a project to build on IQM (integrated quality management) work undertaken in recent years.</p> <p>DS suggested the formation of a working group to take the project forward. A number of attendees offered their support to the group. A meeting is to be arranged for mid October.</p> <p>Sue Kelly asked for other members of the tourism trade who did not attend the forum to be given the chance to put forward ideas for RDP projects.</p>	<p>DS / MK / RS / SK / AF / CH / DP</p> <p>DP / CH</p>

	<p>RS requested further information regarding existing projects across Wales. AF explained that this could be made available for specific projects on request.</p>	
6.	<p><u>North Wales Borderlands 2009 campaign review</u></p> <p>CH gave a presentation on the North Wales Borderlands 2009 campaign review. DP concluded the presentation with an update on the attractions guide and consortium.</p> <p>CH asked members of the trade to think about how they could work with council officers to generate PR stories for 2010, and to work up packages / deals that might add incentives to future email campaigns and other marketing actions.</p> <p>DP encouraged attractions present to think about offering a special deal e-voucher on the borderlands website, or a tear-out voucher in the new attractions booklet.</p> <p>DS asked if fellow forum members felt the marketing area name 'North Wales Borderlands' was strong enough.</p> <p>MK said focussing on Chester was key to getting people to visit the borderlands and felt Chester should be featured on the front page of future communications material.</p> <p>DS suggested there may be political sensitivities that would make this difficult. CH agreed and raised questions about how much attention should be drawn towards a neighbour's product if that product is stronger.</p> <p>RS felt that drawing attention to a strong neighbouring product like Chester shouldn't be a problem if tourism officers are strong enough sales people.</p> <p>MK also expressed concerns about the lack of advertising opportunities in the smaller A5 brochure.</p> <p>DS said he liked the 2009 brochure.</p>	<p>All</p> <p>GP / SK / JJ / FB</p>
7.	<p><u>'Destination Wrexham' 2009 campaign review</u></p> <p>DP and CH gave a presentation on the Real Wrexham guide 2009 and 2010.</p> <p>Examples of the z-card town centre map were also shown. MK suggested a borough-map be added if the z-card is reprinted in the future.</p>	

	<p>MK raised concerns about how advertising opportunities were communicated to the trade and wasn't confident Cross Lanes had been made aware of opportunities to advertise in the 2009 edition.</p>	
8.	<p><u>North Wales STEAM Initiative and Research 2009</u></p> <p>DP gave a presentation on the North Wales STEAM Initiative and the 2008 results. DP also gave an insight into other 2009 research which is currently being undertaken.</p>	
9.	<p><u>Trade Communications</u></p> <p>CH discussed the current communication methods used to talk with the trade. CH explained that there will be a questionnaire circulated to all trade in coming weeks and urged people to fill-in and return the form.</p>	All
10.	<p><u>AOB</u></p> <p>RS said Wrexham had improved tremendously in recent years, but was concerned residents and businesses were still prone to encourage visitors to go to Chester instead of exploring in Wrexham.</p> <p>RS suggested some thought be given to how local people and businesses could be encouraged to fly the flag for Wrexham more when giving visitors advice about things to see and do.</p> <p>CH felt this provided an interesting context to the earlier debate about how strongly Chester should be promoted in official Wrexham / North Wales Borderlands tourism literature, and said some thought could be given to how residents and businesses might be encouraged to act as ambassadors for Wrexham as part of the concept of integrated quality management (IQM).</p> <p>DS thanked everyone for coming and reiterated the need to try and capitalise on any RDP funding opportunities.</p>	CH / DP