

Wrexham Tourism Connect

Issue 11

Winter 2008

Dear Tourism colleague,

2007 was a busy year for tourism in Wrexham County Borough and 2008 will be even busier as we see the opening of the Eagles Meadow development and the introduction of a new direct rail service to London.

The whole ethos of the Tourism Forum is one of a Partnership between the tourism businesses of Wrexham (whatever our size or sector we operate in) and the County Borough Council - who through the tourism section, provide the secretariat, admin support and general "gateway" to the full range of council departments.

The forum is an inclusive body and as an operator within the tourism sector you are cordially invited to join us at our meetings. A primary role of the forum rests in our ability to make a contribution to the many processes affecting tourism within the County Borough (and beyond) that create a better future for the common good of us all – which hopefully, means more business!

Should you require any further information about the Wrexham Tourism Forum, please do not hesitate to contact me on 01244 571000 or Nia / David on 01978 292489

Darryl Shaw
Chairman
Wrexham Tourism Forum



Tourism Trade Survey 2007 - Results

Congratulations to the winner of the 2007 Tourism Trade survey, Mrs Coop, Corner House Holiday Houses who won an advert to the value of £250 in the North Wales Borderlands Brochure for returning her completed form.

Whilst the number of returned forms was disappointing we were able to gain some valuable feedback from the trade as to the service we provide.

Amongst the findings were the following observations:

- Whilst the overall rating of the literature we produced remained 'good', a larger proportion of the trade were unfamiliar with what was available to visitors through the Tourism Section.
- Overall the trade's impression of the service offered at Wrexham TIC has improved
- The trade is satisfied with the service offered by the Tourism Section with the format and regularity of communication considered adequate without being too frequent. Suggestions for improvement suggest increased e-communication giving notice of Wrexham Tourism Forum Meetings.
- Though the majority of the trade are aware that a Tourism Forum exists, reasons for non attendance are the inconvenient timing of meetings, inability to spare the time and satisfaction with their current level of business. Despite this, 76% of respondents agreed that a Tourism Forum should exist. A common suggestion for increasing attendance was to introduce guest speakers on occasions.

Wrexham Tourism Forum

Come and have your say. The Wrexham Tourism Forum is open to ALL trade members. The Tourism Forum is a trade body which means that you are in charge, you set the agenda. All items are up for discussion, and as the meetings are held at accommodation and attraction venues throughout the County Borough, it's an opportunity for you to visit places which you may not have been to before. The Wrexham Tourism Forum tackles issues that affect the whole tourism trade (accommodation and attractions alike) throughout the County Borough. Don't be left out. Log onto www.wrexham.gov.uk/wtf for a list of forthcoming dates and minutes of previous meetings

Blue Badge Guide Fam Visit

We are delighted to hear that Bryn Hughes, Simply Nice Tours, is hosting the next annual Blue Badge Guide Familiarisation Visit during the weekend of 14-16th March. Up to 35 Blue Badge Guides will be given a tour of all that Wrexham and the local area has to offer. Bryn has arranged accommodation at Rossett Hall Hotel, with a dinner organised for the Friday evening where the Tourism Section will present each of the guides with an information pack on Wrexham, and give a presentation on all the things to see and do in our area.

A big thank you to Bryn for organising the tour, and for highlighting Wrexham as a destination to the Blue Badge Guides

If you'd like to contact Bryn with regards to the Fam visit or to arrange a tour for your guests, call 01691 718398, or see www.simplynicetours.com

STEAM

The January-June STEAM report indicates a successful start of the year for the industry during 2007. The value of tourism reached £34.7 million for the first 6 months, an increase of 1% on the same period during the previous year, which is a promising start for the year ahead. In 2006 the value of tourism exceeded £70 million for the first time ever, and indications are that 2007 will top this record. The report shows that the Day Visitor market continues to be an important market segment for Wrexham County Borough, accounting for 78% of visitors to the area.

Full year results will be available very soon, the results of which will be published in the next edition of Tourism Connect, or see www.wrexham.gov.uk/tourism.

Wrexham TIC - Bumper year!

2007 proved to be a bumper year for Wrexham TIC. Visitor numbers reached an all time high reaching in excess of 50k visitors for the first time since opening in 1996. At 52,427, visitor numbers amounted to 22% more than during its first year of opening, and 6% more than in 2006. Visitor enquiries to the TIC increased by 11% against 2006 figures. Income to the TIC increased by a staggering 76% on the previous year, 90% of which was spent on ticket sales.

Despite the obvious increased pressure on the services provided by the TIC, Wrexham TIC maintained its consistently high score in the Mystery Shopper Results carried out by Visit Wales for the All Wales TIC Network, achieving an average score of 9% above the national average.

Well done to the TIC Staff and Manager for providing our visitors an excellent service.

St.Davids Day Celebration & The Wrexham Champion Sausage Competition



We are delighted to announce the 1st official 'Wrexham St. David's Day Celebration' which will be held during the weekend of the 1st March 2008.

The festivities will offer a day of enjoyment for all the family on Queens Square, Wrexham showcasing Welsh Produce to celebrate the 1st March. Each of the stalls will feature Welsh produce including food and traditional gifts, with local producers providing the catering. Entertainment will include local choirs, dancers and a harpist, and a childrens' activity area. Also, during the evening NEWI will be hosting a concert by Rhos Orpheus Choir.

The day will also feature a competition to find 'Wrexham's Sausage'! Local butchers have entered their sausages in the hope of winning the title of Wrexhams' Champion Sausage. Whilst there is undoubtedly an element of fun involved plus the opportunity of gaining some excellent PR, the objective is to promote the use of local produce within our accommodation. A panel of judges, including the renowned Chef Colin Pressdee, will judge the competition on the day.

How can you be involved?

We hope that you will support the initiative by including 'Wrexham's Champion Sausage' within your traditional Welsh breakfasts, giving your guests a true welsh flavour during their visit. This is in line with 'creating a sense of place' where visitors experience a true flavour of our language, heritage and culture. Why not pop along to the event and meet the tourism team to find out more about how you could create a greater 'sense of place' at your venue.



For further information regarding the event please contact the Marketing & Events team on 01978 292489 or email tourism@wrexham.gov.uk



Wrexham – London – Direct Rail Link

The eagerly awaited direct rail link from Wrexham to London run by the Wrexham Shropshire Marylebone Railway Company (WSMR) is due to open during Spring 2008. This is excellent news for Wrexham and plans have already been put in place to ensure the 'Real Wrexham' visitor guide will be available on board the trains, and a presentation organised for the rail staff to inform them of the Wrexham offer.

Dates for the Diary!

St Davids Day Celebration	1 March
Science Festival	7-15 March
Blue Badge Guide Fam Visit	14-16 March
Wrexham Tourism Forum	17 April
Wrexham Arts Festival	10 May – 7 June
Berwyn Festival of Music Art and Food	16-18 May

One Wrexham Charter of Belonging

The economic prosperity of recent years has attracted many overseas workers to the Wrexham area. As you can imagine, this is a hot topic for councils these days.

We think that the business community and particularly businesses within the tourism industry have an important leadership role to play in fostering positive community relations. That's why Wrexham Council is inviting local businesses to publicly affirm their commitment to the principles contained in the 'One Wrexham' Charter.

The One Wrexham Charter aims to raise awareness of the diverse nature of people who now live and work in Wrexham. The Charter stands for working together to remove unfairness and promote respect and equality for people regardless of their race, gender, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief, or if they have a disability. Recognition and respect for all people is a fundamental principle for organisations that want to make a positive difference to the future of the area.

You can simply 'sign up' providing you meet the simple criteria and make a commitment to delivering the aims of the Charter. These aims are detailed on the application form.

What are the benefits?

- You will receive a certificate. We would encourage you to display it prominently in your business premises. The certificate will be a public declaration that your business aims to treat everyone fairly.
- As member of the Charter network we will send you information and updates on good practice and legislation.
- You will be invited to attend events that keep you in touch with what else is happening in Wrexham as part of the 'One Wrexham' initiative.
- You will become part of a network of like-minded companies - and able to share good practice.
- Being part of the 'One Wrexham' Charter is entirely free.

Officers from Wrexham Council's Economic Development Department will shortly be contacting members of the Tourism Forum to ask for their support.

Wrexham tourism connect

Produced by the Physical Regeneration and Marketing Section, Economic Development Department, on behalf of the Wrexham Tourism Forum.



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