

**Committee:** King's Lynn & West Norfolk Area Museums Committee

**Date:** December 4<sup>th</sup> 2017

**Report from:** Tourism Officer, Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk

## **1 Introduction**

The report provides updates for the Area Museums Committee on tourism marketing and development activities from summer to December 2017. Key tourism marketing continued, with production of the full range of printed guides for 2017 whilst also continuing to focus more attention on digital activity, especially the new Visit West Norfolk mobile app.

Tim Humphreys left his Tourism Manager post in late August 2017 and the general day-to-day activities, as well as the primary focus on printed publication production during the autumn/winter period of 2017/18, has been overseen by existing Tourism officer Phil Eke since that time.

## **2 Printed marketing**

### **2.1 2017 West Norfolk Holiday Guide**

The final copies of the 2017 West Norfolk Holiday Guide shall be available through the TICs in December before the production and distribution of the 2018 edition (reduced to 25,000 copies for next year) happens in mid-January. The design of this new edition started in October, with final proofing expected before Christmas.

### **2.2 2017 Where to Go & What to Do**

The majority of the 2017 edition (with an increased print-run of 220,000 copies) has now been distributed through the main distribution agencies used, with some copies still available in our local TICs until February next year. The in-house graphic design of this coming year's edition is to start in December 2017.

### **2.3 Discover King's Lynn**

The 2018 edition is set to be published in mid-February 2018. 96% of the increased print run of 160,000 has now been distributed for this year's edition.

### **2.4 Hunstanton mini guide and Downham Market mini guide**

50,000 copies of the Hunstanton mini guide and a slightly increased quantity of 17,000 copies of the Downham Market mini guide were printed in the Spring of 2017. Likewise, the 2018 edition will be printed and released in Spring 2018.

### **2.5 Other publications**

The Borough Council again supported the King's Lynn Town Guides by arranging the print and distribution of the 2017 King's Lynn Guided Walks programme up until the end of the walks programme. There is no indication that this support will stop in 2018, thus next year's publication will be produced and distributed by April 2018.

## **3 Digital marketing**

### **3.1 [www.visitwestnorfolk.com](http://www.visitwestnorfolk.com)**

During the Summer to Autumn period, work has continued to update content on the website, with regularly changing front page items. A marketing campaign to attract new and additional users to the website took place over the pre-Easter period, and there is

an allocated budget for a post-Christmas marketing campaign for the website too. Since the departure of Tim Humphreys in August 2017, the Tourism Officer has needed to focus his attention to the printed publications that are always designed from September-February each financial year. It is acknowledged that, once the “Holiday Guide” and “Where to Go...” publications are fully through the proofing stage, the tourism officer would then go back to focussing a lot more on the department’s online platforms.

### 3.2 West Norfolk mobile phone app

3.2.1 The app (which provides a mobile responsive directory guide to Things to do; Events; Places to eat and local food producers; Shopping; Places to stay, and Local Services throughout West Norfolk) has seen a lot of improvement to its coding by the app designers from New Vision over the Summer-Autumn period of this year. The app should now be more stable, more compatible with the latest updated operating systems, and quicker in its functionality across both major platforms. A note from the designers;

*“We have rolled out a new version of the iPhone app. This app uses shared code for Android and iPhone which means that it will be easier to keep the two versions in line. The Android version was released some time ago. The new iPhone app is compatible with the latest version of the operating system. As part of this rollout we have made a number of small improvements “*

3.2.2 The list of retail ‘Offers’ available on the app is not populated at the moment, though it is foreseen that the Tourism officer will be able to focus his time on populating this list ahead of the Christmas sales and the usual seasonal food offers, once the production of the Holiday Guide progresses. If any members of the Area Museums Committee can think of any organisations/businesses that are running seasonal offers for visitors to the area, then please do get in touch with the Tourism department.

3.2.3. Users have downloaded the app a total of 3,348 times across both platforms from the start of the year up until the end of October 2017.

### 3.3 Events

In 2016, just under 1,600 events were promoted on the Visit West Norfolk website with around 38,000 views of individual events. Up until November 21<sup>st</sup> 2017, this year has seen 1,695 events promoted on the website/app, with 44,208 views already (up until the end of October), so there will have been a large increase in event listing views by the end of this calendar year in comparison to previous years.

It is great to see a lot more Christmas-oriented events being uploaded to the listings this year (the Event entries inputting is mostly overseen by part-time Tourism Department support officer Bob Price, who currently works in the department three days a week (and up until April 2018) as well-needed support in Tim Humphrey’s absence.

As always though, we need to encourage more tourism businesses to use the event database not only to promote their own events, but also for business to use it as a resource to promote upcoming events in their locality, which may be of interest to their customers.

## 4 **Planned activity**

4.1 As mentioned in a previous Area Museums Committee meeting, and just to confirm, the 2-year action plan linked to the Destination Management Plan was updated and rolled forward as a 2017 and 2018 plan, through consultations with the West Norfolk Tourism Forum.

- 4.2 A key action highlighted in addition to all the ongoing Tourism work is the development of two themed trails, focussed on encouraging visitors to explore more to the rural areas of West Norfolk and particularly featuring the area's heritage and natural environment product. Web and mobile App technology is to be used to link a series of themed locations and sites, accompanied by information on local businesses and services encouraging people to follow a suggested trail or create their own trails whilst also using local services and facilities.

This project is currently called "West Norfolk Explorer: Tourism Trails", and we are pleased to announce that Tim Humphrey's original funding application was successful, with the LEADER Programme announcing in September 2017 that it is to award the funding for this project (and the associated 18-month fixed-term Project Officer post to help manage the project). The project is thought to complement and launch alongside the opening of the planned extension of the Coastal Path link between King's Lynn and Hunstanton next year.

## **5 Other developments**

### **5.1 Stories of Lynn mobile App**

The Stories of Lynn mobile App, which provides interactive audio and visual guides to the new Stories of Lynn exhibition as well as a guide to exploring heritage sites throughout the town, has now been released for visitors to use. A new Communications Officer has also been appointed by the Borough Council for the Town Hall complex and Stories of Lynn venue in recent weeks; Rachel Murphy.

### **5.2 Partnerships**

- 5.2.1 West Norfolk Tourism continues to work closely with Visit Norfolk and Visit East Anglia to promote the county and wider area. The Borough Council has also continued to work with Visit North Norfolk Coast and Countryside, which promotes the entire north Norfolk coastal area.

## **6 Resource implications**

None

## **7 Policy implications**

None

## **8 Recommendations**

The committee is recommended to note the report

## **9 Access to Information**

No background papers

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