

## CABINET MEMBERS REPORT TO COUNCIL

13 October 2022

**COUNCILLOR GRAHAM MIDDLETON - DEPUTY LEADER & CABINET MEMBER FOR BUSINESS, CULTURE AND HERITAGE.**

For the period October 2022

### **1 Progress on Portfolio Matters.**

#### **Heritage open day**

I'd like to thank officers and the civic society for all the hard work put into changing the dates for heritage open day. It's often a huge event and it was great to see that we could still put this on this year for our visitors and residents. Some of the council activity put on as well as the classic car show are below.

- Tours of the Guildhall - the UK's oldest working theatre and the only one still working in which evidence suggests Shakespeare performed.
- Children's activities, trails and all sorts of fun with Norfolk Museum Service
- Films of old Lynn
- Bar in the Red Barn run by Alive West Norfolk
- West Norfolk Artist Association exhibition in the Fermoy Gallery - a special one-off exhibition for Heritage Open Day (it will only be open for 1 day and that's Heritage Open Day)
- Collusion in the White Barn doing tech fun and games: resident company responsible for the incredible projections sharing what they do best.

The guildhall saw over 700 unique visitors on the day. Thanks to the team and all of our amazing volunteers.

The new **Hunstanton Observatory** planning application is coming to a close, with a decision to be made by BCKLWN Planning authorities on our around 19th October 2022.

If the planning application is accepted, building work on the Hunstanton clifftop site would soon commence after that time for a brief burst of activity on site before the official launch of the observatory in January 2022 to take advantage of the dark winter skies.

Our "**Visit West Norfolk...Naturally**" off-season tourism paid campaign starts in the first week of November, which will include a great deal of both visitor-oriented and

business-facing promotional material focussing on sustainable tourism businesses in our area, responsible tourism, active travel and green tourism messaging in general for our area. This digital campaign, including paid Google ads and social media advertising, will run in tandem with the county's own **Visit Norfolk...Naturally** brand, though we hope that our own west Norfolk branded version of it could be a permanent feature of our portfolio for us to build upon.

**Increasing Group Stays in King's Lynn:** Aside from our usual annual advertising in group/touring trade publications, we are currently in mid-campaign (of an initial 6-month duration) to specifically promote King's Lynn to more tours and coaching operators, in paid partnership with external business WeWantGroups to contact up to 4,000+ touring and coaching companies in the UK with a series of our suggested experiences within the town of King's Lynn. The current page of content for groups can be found here: <https://www.visitwestnorfolk.com/kings-lynn-experiences-for-groups/>

Aside from that, a themed 'Christmas in King's Lynn' e-shot has already been sent out by WeWantGroups (in September 2022) to 4,000+ group/tour operators to gain further interest and possible advance bookings of seasonal experiences in the town and surrounding areas for this Christmas and the next.

We are currently heavily involved in partnership working with other groups to create new high-profile trails in the west Norfolk area, such as the following three new trails:

**"King's Lynn Walsingham Way"** (2023 onwards: permanent route, online and physical)

A brand new and permanent, first of its kind, rural and historic trail which will link up King's Lynn, through the west Norfolk countryside, to the Little Walsingham Shrine. Project led by an external group and supported by P.E.

This trail, of international appeal, goes beyond mere religious interest to include key elements of the history of King's Lynn and our rural villages in equal measure (including figures such as Margery Kempe, who followed the trail centuries ago) for a two-way route between both main destinations and including smaller sections of more manageable trails for walking and cycling, highlighting relevant rural businesses along the route.

**"Norfolk Coast: History & Legends"** (2023 onwards: permanent route, online)

A brand new coastal trail project and associated promotional plan, created and led by the Tourism Department, which links across authority boundaries across the coast from King's Lynn to Cromer, promoting the new link-up of the coastal path from King's Lynn to Snettisham at the same time as developing unique coastal experiences, dark tourism (coastal myths, legends and folklore) and key historical moments along the coast too, including Lord Nelson. The aim is to attract all-year-round tourism to the Norfolk coast, with a heavy focus on West Norfolk, with a cross-demographic appeal.

**"The Hanse Cultural Route: Sustainable Tourism across the continent"** (at least 2023-26)

There is a superb new opportunity for King's Lynn & West Norfolk to lead the way forward in researching high quality experiences across the area which have international appeal, linking closer ties with Europe and the rest of the UK Hanse towns in creating a full international route and set of rich visitor experiences.

### **Investment zones**

In the mini budget the government announced the proposed designation of 38 Investment zones across the country. Norfolk County Council (NCC) have been invited to submit an expression of interest (EOI) to government by 14<sup>th</sup> October for investment zones in Norfolk. Officers are working with (NCC) on the potential opportunity for a King's Lynn focused Investment Zone to be included in their EOI to support the acceleration of housing and commercial development through tax incentives and simplified planning.

### **2 Meetings Attended and Meetings Scheduled**

Public meetings attended

Various meetings with officers and stakeholders