

Member Information Sheet – Tourism Grants

Background

During 2019/20 the District Council has paid out grants of £2,000 each to seven market towns within the District. All towns have recently provided an update on their progress and their responses are reproduced for the information of District Council members below.

Dursley

We have set up a partnership agreement with Gloucestershire County Council library service to run a Visitor Information Centre out of Dursley Library for a 6month trial period initially, starting from April 2020. The agreement was signed November 2019. This initial trial period will be used to assess the success and ongoing affordability of this approach, data will be collected regarding footfall and enquiries etc. If successful, the agreement time will be extended.

A progress meeting between ourselves and the Dursley Library management team, was held on 21st January 2020. The grant is being used for the initial set up costs; as well as a dedicated area in the Library, we will have a dedicated email address and access to social media. Library staff will deal with enquiries.

In addition, we continue to support the Cotswold Edge & Severn Vale Tourism Network, providing the main admin support/point of contact for the Network. They plan to review their overall strategy in 2020. We also continue to develop our 'Visit Dursley' page on our Dursley Town Council website.

Painswick

The Council / TIC have undertaken the following as per its application:

1. Undertaken specialist training in the use of social media to enhance tourism this training was attended by Business Representatives / Council Employees / TIC Volunteers, it has been very successful and has enabled greater and better use of social media - cost £1500.00
2. Ordered and received tourist information local maps, which are given out freely to visitors cost £500.00

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Nailsworth

Nailsworth Town Council used the £2,000 to contribute to the cost of moving our existing Town Information Centre into the Library, combining vital tourism and information services in one place. Since the move, the TIC in the Library has;

- given Nailsworth a full time library service, open five and a half days a week
- been updated to make it look more professional and to expand its uses
- sparked a mural competition and rejuvenated a tired corner of the library with a Nailsworth-themed mural
- encouraged the Library to take part in Nailsworth Goodwill Evening by combining TIC and Library volunteer interests and help
- been used for public consultations, with the TIC volunteers assisting
- used by the Neighbourhood Warden and councillors as a place to hold drop ins
- become a useful place to hold informal non-confidential meetings
- allowed Nailsworth TC to move into a central location, giving us closer contact with the public and TIC, and being at the heart of everything happening in the town.

Wotton-under-Edge

Wotton Town Council has had numerous meeting with the Heritage Centre in Wotton regarding the most appropriate usage of this funding over the past year.

In short there are various initiatives still in the pipeline, including the main leaflet for the town. The leaflet is mostly complete now apart from a few map errors. We should be going to print by the end of the month all being well. Half the grant will fund the printing.

There have also been meetings regarding the walking maps around the town. The Town Council's PROW Partnership has been actively working on the Cotswolds Gateway Towns Project. Thanks to this there will be 4 new maps fully funded. We intend to build on this initiative and are looking at upgrading up to five of the remaining maps into quality products to compliment the Gateway maps using some of this grant money. We will be sourcing someone to generate the maps required, add the updated text and print them off under Wotton Town Council/Heritage Centre banner. In all we hope to have nine quality maps for sale at the Heritage Centre and we may even consolidate these into a single booklet but that is down the line a little bit.

After a successful 'Events Postcard' last year, the second Events Postcard is nearing completion...we are just waiting for the Wotton Arts Association and the Charities Fair to provide/confirm dates. 5000 of these will be printed by a local printer who gives us a very decent price.

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After the above has been done, we will assess and see if there is any of the grant money left to fund other projects.

Stroud

We commissioned a feasibility report on the potential for the development of a sustainable tourism hub at Stroud station. The total cost of the report was £3,000.

The Council considered the report in November 2018 and concluded that: the space available at the station was not suitable for the proposed hub, the costs were too high and there were limited opportunities for community involvement.

We have not progressed the development of an information centre, because sadly we do not have space at our office, but we are considering relocating, which might provide an opportunity for a volunteer led service should funding be available. In the meantime, a local shop owner has volunteered to stock a good range of leaflets and is acting as an informal information point. His shop is open 7 days a week, which is a big advantage. We have also picked up a number of additional visitors to our office, where we do offer some local information, e.g. bus timetables.

In the meantime, a community led Tourism Forum has been established, which includes a number of local businesses and the Five Valleys Shopping Centre. Town Council officers have been attending meetings to support the forum. We have also provided funding for a report on the potential for developing a website – total cost £1,000 - our contribution £800. The forum are meeting this afternoon to discuss the next steps.

So in summary we have spent a total £3,800 plus officer time on tourism projects.

In our application we also mentioned the development of a Festivals Forum – this is also progressing well and the group is meeting regularly. Town Council officers have been attending meetings to support the forum. The aim is to support more collaborative working, both between the festivals and the town's venues. Both have identified a need to promote volunteering, so we have recently provided a grant of £10,000 to create a volunteer co-ordinator post, on a trial basis and based at the Sub Rooms. The co-ordinator will recruit and train volunteers for both venues and festivals. The Council believes that the town's arts and cultural scene is a vital part of our offer to tourists, so we see this as an important investment in the economy of the town.

We would like to thank Stroud District Council for their contribution to this work and would certainly welcome further discussion about how you might support both tourism and arts and culture in our town, which are vital elements of the District's economic success.

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Stonehouse

We are working with GWR (and Network Rail) to get some information boards about the town and its facilities put up at the train station. We have got quotes for the boards but we need their permission.

Berkeley

- At the meeting of Berkeley Town Council 15th July it was agreed to pass the Grant onto Berkeley Books in order that they can provide a Tourist Information Point in Berkeley
- Berkeley Books filled in a grant application form and it was agreed to grant them £2000 (19th August minutes)
- Two members of Berkeley Town Council joined the Berkeley Books Committee
- Berkeley Books have now created a website: www.berkeleyvaletourism.co.uk which is excellent and there will be boards all over the local area with QR codes pointing to the website
- District Councillor Gordon Craig updated the council on this at the council meeting on 20th Jan and the money has been used setting up the website