
Warwick District Council Overview & Scrutiny **Committee Report** **6th March 2018**

The following is a review of activity that Shakespeare's England has undertaken on behalf of all its stake holders both Public and non- public sector, since we last met with the Overview and Scrutiny committee in November 2016 and incorporating the quarterly Shakespeare's England Board Reports

Explorer Pass

- The Explorer Pass by Shakespeare's England was launched at Kenilworth Castle in September 2017.
- The Rural Payments Agency have now settled Claim 1 of the Grant (£8349). The 2nd claim is due to be submitted in June 2018.
- We are currently running online and offline campaigns to promote the card including via the VisitBritain Shop.
- Our aim is to contract 3 distribution partners in time for the main Visitor season. We are currently in discussions with Tiquets, House of Britain and Encore
- Kate Varvedo, SE Marketing & Communications Manager will meet potential partners at Excursions (27 January), BIM (Britain & Ireland Market Place) 30 January and UKinbound Convention 7-9 February. Helen Peters will be meeting potential overseas distributors at ExploreGB 1-2 March

Stay, Play, Explore- Warwickshire

- The short breaks programme entitled **Stay, Play Explore – Warwickshire** launched in July with a photo shoot at Warwick Racecourse and to date we have received over 120 bookings. Warwick Castle is the most popular attraction, receiving 110 redemptions. We have a budget target of £3250 for the year and to date have reached £1,000.
- As at 12/12/17
Bookings = 123
Redemptions = 311
Value = £13,867
Web hits = 11,886
- Top 5 Redemptions
Warwick Castle x 110
Shakespeare Birthplace Trust x 53
MAD Museum x 52
British Motor Museum x 26
Butterfly Farm x 20
- SE Income target 2017/18 = £3,250 at 31/12/17 = £455
- Being restricted by accommodation challenges, so looking at trialling a new pricing model. It would make all the difference if we could persuade

Holiday Inn Warwick & Kenilworth and Hilton Warwick to join the programme. Currently most guests are being accommodated in Coventry

Discover England Funds

- We continue to be part of 3 successful DEF Funds (Discover England Funds):
 1. The Collection from England's Historic Cities - New Place (£1m)
 2. Great British Boating -Waterways Test & Learn Project (£200k+)
 3. England's Literary Greats – test & learn project (£200k+)

We are also working with VisitBritain's Gateway initiative to promote Birmingham Airport as a point of entry (£450k -£750k) and the WCC Skills for Employment Grant - Hospitality Means Business (£35,000 fund).

In total, through these initiatives Shakespeare's England Members will benefit from additional funding of **£2,185,000**

The Collection

- The Collection was promoted at World Travel Market in November 2017 and meetings were held with potential partners including Golden Tours, Evan Evans, AC Tours.
- The key deliverables of the project is for the new itineraries to be incorporated in a minimum of 5 operators programmes
- Deliver 220,000 additional guests to UK Historic Cities
- The Collection will take a prominent positions on the UKinbound stand at WTM 2018 (World Travel Market) and also be promoted at the Gala dinner. Shakespeare's England is leading on this part of the programme delivery

Waterways Project

- Test and learn exercise undertaken at UKinbound German Sales Mission in Frankfurt December 2017, which will be followed up by representation at ITB (the World's Leading Travel Trade Show) in Berlin (March 7-9th)
- Good appetite for the programme which focuses on the 'Warwickshire Ring' so great opportunities for the WDC region.
- Full itineraries now being worked up a long with a sales deck prior to contracting distribution partners.

Great Literary Heroes

- Following the test and learn exercise at DEBNA (Destination Britain North America) Day Trip and 1 night 2 day itineraries are being developed for each of the key destinations – Shakespeare's England / Nottinghamshire / Hampshire. These can be booked individually or packaged together
- Destination Management Companies (DMCs) are being approached to work with as distribution partners
- Stoneleigh Abbey is an integral part of this project with its links to both Jane Austen and Lord Byron and which means that Shakespeare's England has links with 3 of the 4 literary heroes the project is being based around

Gateways Project – England's Heartland

- Photo launch of the project photo took place at World Travel Market (WTM) in November, the UK launch at Birmingham Airport (BHX) is scheduled for May. SE Board Members as well as key dignitaries and interested parties – Warwick & Stratford Mayors, Local MPs, Coventry City of Culture representatives, Andy Street as Combined Authority Mayor.

- A US Press influencer was hosted in December 2017, and a US Roadshow is scheduled to take place in conjunction Destination Britain America in Autumn 2018
- Matador has been commissioned to carry out filming in all venues to produce video content for websites and as a sales tool.

Meet Shakespeare's England

- Following on from the test and learn period SE launched a Business Tourism add on to its Membership programme ring fencing £10,000 of its overall budget to support this and targeting 20 Business Members at £500 annual membership so as to match fund this investment through private partnerships. To date, we have 15, the following Warwick Businesses have joined this initiative, Warwick Castle, Warwick Racecourse, Kenilworth Castle, Chesford Grange, Hill Close Gardens and Wroxall Abbey. The website now features separate Business Tourism pages and a separate urls and the Shakespeare's England conference desk has now been launched.
- We were also delighted to be awarded the **Business Tourism Award 2017** at the Coventry & Warwickshire Tourism & Culture Awards in September
- We also ran a **Business Tourism Familiarisation Visit** in May, hosting 30 PA's, In-house Event Managers and Event Agencies. Warwick Conferences hosted the breakfast and similarly the visit concluded with a reception at Warwick Castle, in between 50% of the group visited Stratford venues and the other 50% Warwick venues including lunch at Mallory Court Hotel. The cost to us for hosting was less than £2k and Warwick Conferences alone obtained a £60k booking as a result of the visit. We will be repeating this in September 2018
- 1st meeting of Business Stakeholders in 2018 scheduled, 14 February at Warwick Conferences
- New *Meet SE* stand designed and produced for Confex (Conference & Exhibitions Trade Show) 28 Feb – 1 March, which is reusable and will also be taken to The meetings Show in June

Warwick's King James Festival

- Shakespeare's England's Chief Executive Chaired the Warwick's King James Festival Stakeholders Committee, which delivered a highly successful year one Festival Weekend for Warwick in 3-5 November 2017.
- The Warwick Attractions Group have already reconvened to discuss 2018 and it has been agreed to continue with the Warwick Festival as a programme.
- Guy of Warwick will be the theme for 2018 with the festival taking place over the last weekend in May culminating in a pageant on Monday 28th
- Shakespeare's England will continue to Chair this group

Golden Keys

- Shakespeare's England is now an Associate Member of The London Chapter of the Golden Keys or Les Clef D'or. This is the Membership organisation for Concierges from the top 5* hotels. They are incredibly influential when it comes to what Visitors do during their stay
- 90% of our 9.3m visitors are Day Trippers and of the international visitors the majority are travelling from London
- We will be working with the GK as distribution partners for the Explorer Pass
- With the direct links between Marylebone and Warwick & Leamington Spa, this is an excellent partnership to capitalise on and one I made full use of when I was at Bicester Village

New Board Members

- Dallas Burston Polo Club and Solihull College & University Centre / Stratford-upon-Avon College have both joined the SE Board.
- Thus a total of 15 Members enabling Warwickshire County Council to become a voting member not just an observer as with 16 in total 3 of whom would be public sector there is less than the 19.999% Public Sector interest as per the Terms of Agreement.

Shakespeare's England Website

- There remain ongoing issues with the website resulting in the Members upload facility and the E-commerce areas of the website not functioning as required.
- Following a meeting with Smile, the developers, in early January a clear set of actions moving forward and an agreement from Smile to resolve the recurring issues with immediate effect and build the outstanding E Commerce element of the site. A deadline of end of April had been set for these activities.
- Next step is to improve the user experience to encourage longer dwell times and the booking of products, via our own fully functioning E commerce site

Staffing

- Gemma Goddon who had been the Marketing and Communications Manager since 2013 left Shakespeare's England in June 2017 and has been replaced by Kate Varvedo.
- Dan Campbell, the Marketing and Administrative Coordinator, resigned and left the business on 31 December 2017 for personal reasons. A replacement has just been appointed and we hope will start late March

Apprenticeship

- One of my personal goals for 2017/18 is to start a Shakespeare's England apprenticeship scheme
- We are in talks with Stratford College and have interviewed 3 potential candidates.
- There are government grants available for the academic element of the apprenticeship, but we would need to find around £10 - £12k in salary
- I am looking for 2 or 3 SE Members to partner with us in the scheme to share the resource of the apprentice and co fund. This also broadens the experience obtained by the apprentice.
- Offers have been received from Shakespeare Birthplace Trust and Eden Hotel Collection, allowing the apprentice hands on experience working for a Destination Management. Organisation (DMO), Visitor attraction and hotel group.

ExploreGB 2019

- Shakespeare's England was invited to BID again for VisitBritain's annual flagship event for hosted international travel trade buyers and media, known as ExploreGB.
- We had submitted a BID in 2017 to host in 2018 and narrowly lost out to Newcastle
- The Bid writing period was incredibly tight, receiving the invitation on 21st December 2017 with a deadline date of 29th January 2018
- The venue would be NAEC Stoneleigh and provides an unprecedented opportunity to host over 700 Travel Trade in the area
- BHX have been outstanding and pledged £20k for transport amongst other support.

- The SE Board agreed £1k each towards hosting the delegates and sponsoring the sourcing of local products for goody bags.
- The Councils have all offered in kind support through such things as resources and design work, with the door open for further discussions once the BID is secured.
- We also received letters of support from the WMCA, Coventry City of Culture Trust, Tesla, and RDM
- The decision will be announced at ExploreGB 2018 on Friday 2 March

Destination Management Plan

- Jo Lloyd stepped down as Chair of the DMP in September 2017. Philippa Rawlinson (SBT) was voted in as the new Chair. The 7 key priorities from 2015 have been consolidated to 5
 - i. Evidence base & market intelligence – **RSC/WDC**
 - ii. Destination (infrastructure) development- **SDC**
 - iii. Soft product development – **SE/SBT**
 - iv. Communication and profile – **WC**
 - v. Skills & Careers – **Q Hotels/WCC**

Marketing Activity Summary

Website Audience Overview:

	Q3 - July - Sept 2017	vs.	Q4 - Oct - Dec 2017
Sessions	29,415		27,020
Page Views	64,040		67,111
Pages / Session	2.18		2.49
Avg. Session Duration	01:27		01:41
Bounce Rate	62.44%		62.13%
% New Sessions	84.27%		83.34%

Social media

Twitter

117 tweets / Engagements 595 Link referrals 62
 Followers increased from 6117 to 6213 = 1.5%

Facebook

Engagement 1.7K / 160 posts / Followers 23K+ / Like referrals 572

Instagram

Engagements 1.5K / Posts 46
 Followers increased from 683 to 907 = 33%

LinkedIn -

Followers increased from 909 - 1018 = 12%

- Referrals to the website from social media and email marketing have increased as a result of the changes made in our social media campaigns, great examples were Enchanted Kenilworth, and The King James Festival Warwick

Upcoming campaigns:

- Explorer Pass: social media campaign for Valentine's Day.
Pay Per Click (PPC) campaign set-up.
VisitBritain Valentine's Day offer promoted on the VisitBritain Shop.
DL leaflet distribution campaign to the Midlands / Cotswolds area through Glide Media.

Upcoming Events:

- UKInbound Convention 7-9th February
- Confex 28th Feb – 1st March – Business Tourism Event
- Explore GB 1-2nd of March
- Explore GB Fam Trips China 3rd/4th March & USA 4th/5th/6th March
- RAF Lakenheath 3rd March
- Meet GB Fam Trip 16-18 April – International Business Tourism buyers
- Meet GB Conference 19-20 April
- Shakespeare's Birthday Celebrations – 20-22 April
- Guy of Warwick Festival & Pageant 27-29 May
- The Meetings Show 27-29 June – Business Tourism Event

PR Activity

- In June, 5 National Press came on our 'Garden's' Familiarisation Trip, visiting Hill Close Gardens and Lord Leycester Hospital as part of the itinerary. The cost of this to SE was £1,350 and brought in an ROI of £45k.
- In addition there have been 28 independent Press visits to the region, 11 of which were based in Warwick, resulting in over £399,000 in equivalent advertising value,
- Of the 17 not based in Warwick, 5 also visited Warwick.
- Good coverage was provided for Warwick Castle, and Kenilworth Castle as the venue for the launch of the Explorer Pass aswell as Lord Leycester as the venue for the King James Festival Banquet.

PR Targets 2017/18

- 35 Press releases. 6 to 31/12/17 = 17%
- Equivalent Advert Value £1,000,000. £399,499 to 31/12/17 = 39.9%
- 100 Press Visits. 17 to 31/12/17 = 17%
- + 15% Press Pass scheme (39 to 45). 6 signings at 31/12/17 = 100%
- 2 x Interest specific Fam Trips ongoing
- 10 x Readers competitions ongoing

Dates	EAV	Monthly Average
Total Nov 2013 - Aug 2014	£1,496,125	£149,612
Total Sept 2014 - Aug 2015	£246,326	£20,527
Total Sept 2015 – Aug 2016	£4,484,969	£373,747

Total Sept 2016 – Aug 2017	£958,925	£79,910
Sept 2017 – Dec 2017	£399,469	£99,867
CUMMULATIVE TOTAL (Nov 2013 – Dec 2017)	£7,585,814	£156,224
	Circulation	Readership
CUMMULATIVE TOTAL (Nov 2013 – Dec 2017)	606,896,860	1,517,224,953

Business Development Update

SE Membership Target 2017 / 18 = 53

26 x Bronze, 24 x Silver, 1 x Gold, 1 x Strategic

Results 1 Sept 17 – 31 Jan = 14 26% of target

4 Bronze, 7 Silver, 0 Gold, 0 Strategic + 3 *Meet Shakespeare's England*

Area split

SDC x 6 = 43%, WDC x 2 = 14% Other x 6 = 43%

- Prospective members are requesting specific, tangible, benefits of SE membership, so we are producing a Sales Pack to include a Presentation Deck, 2017/18 Membership Leaflet, Explorer Pass Guide & DL, USB stick and full contact details.
- Our geographical demographic has grown in the last 12 months, with members being recruited in Coventry, Rugby and the Cotswolds. There is definitely a market in these areas and there are people keen to work with the SE brand, so a targeted face to face leaflet drop and 1-2-1 engagement initiative will be carried out in all local towns.
- Culture Coventry 2021 and Commonwealth Games 2022 provides fantastic opportunities

Shakespeare's England's 2017/18 Update Objectives and KPI's

1. Increase overall membership by 20%, WDC Membership by 10% and non-public sector income by 20% reducing the % of public : non-public sector income

Year End August 2017 there were 128 Shakespeare's England Members, the target is to increase this by 20% allowing for churn, this equates to an additional 25 and a year-end total of 153 Members. As at 18 January Membership stands at 133 (87% of target) with 9 awaiting paperwork completion (142). 11 chose not to renew on 1 Sept 2018. 6 of these 16 are from WDC including Honiley Court Hotel, Hill Top Farm, Woodside and Binswood Hall, others include Cotswold Distillery and Ramada Coventry

A target of 20 *Meet Shakespeare's England* Members is also in place. We currently have 15, 8 of whom are within WDC if you include the Polo Club

Non public sector income is targeted at +20% against 2016/17. We achieved

£111,165 in 2016/17 so the non- public sector income target is target is £133,398. Month end December 2017 this stood at £69,015 = 52% of target

2. Delivery of E commerce income above budget

There are 3 E commerce revenue streams set for 2017/18

Stay Play Explore	= £ 3,250
Explorer Pass	= £37,675
Website advertising	= £10,000
Total	= £50,925

Current position

Stay Play Explore	= £ 455
Explorer Pass	= £9,349
Advertising	= £.00.00
Total	= £10,259 20% of target

3. Delivery of confirmed KPI's in an agreed Board Report format to provide insight into Tourism trends and benchmark analysis

A Draft Volume & Value Dashboard and How's Business Questionnaire is being developed. The 1st questionnaire will be going out to members soon and this will be repeated quarterly. Value & Volume data will also be collected quarterly and build towards a formal Annual Business Report for Shakespeare's England

4. Achievement of Member Satisfaction Targets agreed by the Board

To date there have been 2 Shakespeare's England Members Satisfaction studies run. The first in January 2017 and a second in Sept/Oct 2017. Due to the small sample numbers small changes result in large swings. The Board has now determined to run this annually to provide a more accurate picture

5. Increase in non- public sector Board Members to 13

Current Non- public sector SE Board Members :-

Birmingham Airport	Bicester Village	Eden Hotel Collection
Royal Shakespeare Company	Avon Boating	Shakespeare Birthplace
Trust	Warwick Castle	English Heritage
Hallmark Welcombe	Chiltern Railways	Strat>forward

- Dallas Burston Polo Club/ixl Events
- Solihull College & University Centre / Stratford-upon-Avon College joined the Board of Shakespeare's England December 2017

In addition

- Increases are also being sort in website traffic and social media engagement
- Where possible the EAV for WDC Members will be reported separately.

Benchmarking Review of Murphy Salisbury Accountancy

A scheduled review of the service & fees charged by Murphy Salisbury the Shakespeare's England auditors was carried out and comparisons made with alternative supplier. The results were

Murphy Salisbury = £3,008

Alternative = £1,780

Indicating a potential saving of £1,228

On request Murphy Salisbury reviewed their fees and reduced them as follows;-

£1,750 net of VAT, or £2,100 VAT inclusive

SE will retaining their service, with the next review scheduled for August 2020.

Finance & Reserve Structure

SE now has an agreed Reserve to cover

Salaries/Pensions	£26k
Office fees	N/A
DD/SO	N/A
Product Liabilities	Explorer Pass monthly variance

This is £37,000 + an allowance to cover potential Explorer Passes liabilities based on the monthly EP liability report. Most DMOs work with a Reserve equating to approximately 10% of turnover. The budgeted SE turnover for 2017/18 Financial Year is £373,981. The SE Book Keeper will be instructed to maintain and manage this reserve.

Direct Debit Payments – Suzee Laxton has provided details of the GoCardless scheme that she has previous experience of. It seems very cost effective at £223.60, based on current membership, is Compatible with our accounting system, Xero, and our e-commerce site, this will be rolled out with immediate effect for new members and for all renewals 1 September 2018.

Shakespeare's England Brand & Region 'Hard & Fuzzy Boundaries'. There are continuing discussions around the area that Shakespeare's England covers. On review of a google map with all members pinned, shows that the majority of members cluster within Stratford & Warwick Districts. With Coventry being awarded City of Culture 2021 we are currently looking at what this could mean for SE and whether there may be opportunities to expand our DMO to incorporate Coventry in some way.