

VISIT WALES

Mid Wales Regional Forum

September 22nd 2016

Gregynnog Hall, Newtown, Powys

Present:

Name		Representing
Gareth Price	GP	Twristiaeth Ceredigion Tourism
Richard Tyler	RT	Brecon Beacons National Park Authority
Roz Owen	RO	Natural Resources Wales
Ian Rutherford	IR	WAVA/ Dyfi Biosphere Tourism Group
Ann Eleri Jones	AEJ	Ceredigion CC / Ceredigion Destination Management Partnership
Eirlys Lloyd	ELI	RDP Ceredigion CC
Rhiain Williams	RhW	National Library of Wales
Bev Dimmock	BD	RSPB
Llion Pughe	LIP	Best of Wales
Andy Rowland	AR	Eco Dyfi / Dyfi Biosphere
Wendy Abel	WA	Mid North Powys /Cambrian Mountains Tourism Networks
Arwyn Watkins	AW	Cambrian Training
Ed Parsons	EP	Elan Valley Visitor Centre/Welsh Water
Steve Hughson	SH	Royal Welsh Agricultural Show
Elizabeth Jeffrey	EJ	Brecon Beacons Sustainable Tourism Destination Partnership
Rhodri Llwyd Morgan	RhLIM	Aberystwyth University
Laura Thomas	LT	Powys CC
Val Hawkins	VH	Mid Wales Tourism
Aled Rees	AR	Cambria Tours
Gerwyn Evans	GE	Head of Tourism Development VW
Helen Jones	HJ/REM	Regional Engagement Manager VW
Gwawr Price	GP/REM	Regional Engagement Manager VW
Caryl Jones	CJ	Industry Engagement Manager
Claire Dwight	CD	Senior Tourism B2B Marketing Manager

Apologies

Paul Donovan	PD	Regional TAB Representative/WATO
Paul Bowland	PB	National Trust
Rowland Rees Evans	RRE	Penrhos Golf Club
Ben Davies	BD	Arriva Trains Wales

Minutes:

<p>Welcome and Introduction GP Welcomed all to the meeting and extended an additional welcome to new members.</p>	
<p>Minutes from last meeting The Minutes from the last meeting were approved by AR and seconded by LT</p> <p>ACTION – All agreed that Ed Parsons should be formally appointed as Vice chairperson.</p>	
<p>Matters arising from the Regional Updates</p> <p>GP stressed the importance of the updates as an information source for members.</p> <p>There were a number of additions to the regional updates:</p> <p>VH requested that LIP give a brief synopsis of his written update as it had been presented in Welsh only.</p> <p>SH gave further information regarding the RWAS's future plans and emphasised that his organisation wished to diversify and build on achievements to date.</p> <p>RhW emphasised the National Library's wish to widen their existing audience and had a large number of events planned.</p> <p>IR gave information regarding the Attractions Conference on 4th October.</p> <p>AEJ and LT fed back business comments regarding the lateness of VW's "Year of Adventure" collateral. CD said that in future years this would be undertaken earlier.</p> <p>RhLIM gave further information regarding the University's plans for the Old College.</p> <p>RT discussed the BBNPA Visitor Centre changes at the Mountain Centre, Libanus. The TIC would be seasonally staffed and the café would be franchised. There would also be office space available for staff.</p> <p>In Paul Donovan's absence, GE reported on the outdoor sector. AW emphasised the need for strategic direction in Mid Wales and commented that there is no specific Outdoor Providers group in Mid Wales. GE recognised this, but stated that the South East area covers the majority of the Mid region. EJ commented that if solutions are imposed without consultation, they are often urban rather than rural. She emphasised the importance of SMEs and that strategies needed to support these businesses and the more rural, less densely populated areas, such as Mid Wales. AR said that he had attended a WATO meeting on behalf of the Dyfi activity providers and that the organisation followed an industry led approach. VH emphasised the importance of the outdoor sector and the issues that have arisen</p>	

<p>that a scoping study had been undertaken, which looked at the generation of economic benefit.</p> <p>AW asked for budget clarity. He is instrumental in the arranging of a European Conference for World Chefs to take place in May 2017 at Celtic Manor. He felt that he had experienced difficulties in securing public sector partners' support.</p> <p>CD acknowledged that more resources were required and informed members that Visit Britain (VB) also has available funding support.</p> <p>RT asked how the Mid region could engage with business tourism, considering the absence of many large scale venues/environment. CD emphasised that international partnerships could be developed with smaller scale venues as this type of facility is often what is required. EJ commented that the development of packages seemed to be a positive way forward.</p> <p>ACTION: circulate details of VB funding to members. ACTION: Business Tourism to be an agenda item at next Forum.</p> <p>RT asked for guidance for inland areas regarding the planned 2018 thematic year, the "Year of the Sea". GE said that VW will be putting resources into this and will inform partners asap.</p> <p>ACTION: "Year of Sea" to be an agenda item at next Forum.</p>	<p>REMs REMs</p> <p>REMs</p>
<p>Update on the partnership for Growth Strategy Review</p> <p>GE reported that the review's sign off is imminent and it would then be circulated to Forum members.</p>	
<p>Football Association for Wales – Champions League – regional opportunities</p> <p>GE gave a presentation on behalf of UEFA. A number of questions and queries were raised following this.</p> <p>GP asked how far supporters would typically travel. GE replied that typically 2 – 2.5 hours and that there was a need to capture this opportunity and develop packages and other solutions that made things easy for this market. SH raised the idea of a possible showing on a big screen at the RWAS as an idea to help raise the awareness of Mid Wales.</p>	
<p>Marketing</p> <p>CD and CJ each gave presentations on marketing activities and the Year of Legends.</p> <p>Laura Pickup has joined Visit Wales in June as the new "Head of Tourism Marketing"</p> <p>ACTION: links to presentations to be circulated to Forum members</p>	<p>REMs</p>
<p>RTEF / TIPF Applications update</p> <p>As the agenda had over run, time was short for full presentation on the RTEF / TIPF projects, but if Forum members would like further details on the outputs for 2015-16</p>	

please contact the REMs

RTEF Projects 2016-17

Mid Wales Tourism (MWT) – Mid Wales Media Collaboration

MWT will lead the project working collaboratively with the industry, local authorities and destination management partnerships in order to establish a 'Mid Wales Media /PR Hub' deliver an agreed integrated programme of activity including press coverage, media and content itineraries and product content development for Mid Wales which will support the growth of the visitor economy across the region.

Brecon Beacons NPA – Beacons of Legends

The project led by the Brecon Beacons National park will add value to the RTEF Year of Adventure activity supported by Visit Wales in 2015-16 and will support development of a targeted Destination Marketing campaign, Press and PR, Social Media and Blog and redeveloping and repackaging new content for the Destination Website. This project will also include destination support to work with the industry around the Year legends including ambassador activities.

Ceredigion CC – Legendary Landscapes of the West

Working in collaboration with other destinations, The People's Collection Wales, RCAHMW (Royal Commission for Ancient and Historic Monuments in Wales), University of Wales Trinity Saint David's (Lampeter), The National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth University and Cynnal y Cardi, this collaborative project will support the ongoing development of the destination 'Sense of Place' product and the "Year of Legends". The project will deliver an innovative destination-wide package of legend-based interpretive product (digital and print itineraries, product digital development) and interpretation, based on I Beacons technology that will enhance the visitor experience and engagement with the destination's landscape and culture.

TPIF Projects 2016-17

The Crickhowell Resource & Information Centre (CRiC) Legends from Crickhowell and Beyond

The aim of the project is to use the theme of Visit Wales' Year of Legends to enable a consistent message to be promoted by creating a touring exhibition of textile fabric creatures from the Mabinogion, handmade by local artist Helly Powell using Welsh blanket fabrics from Melin Tregwynt in Haverfordwest. The tour will start in Haverfordwest and end at Crickhowell visiting locations along the old coaching route. Digital displays will be used to bring the Mabinogion stories to life.

Dyfi Eco Valley Partnership T/A ecodyfi Dyfi Biosphere Legends

This project will develop and promote a series of events to celebrate unique cultural characteristics of the Dyfi Biosphere area, particularly legends, stories and

characters, so as to be well-placed to take advantage of the rest of the Year of Legends in 2017.

This will be done through developing and promoting an exciting programme of interactive events for delivery during the January-March 2017 period, and an outline programme of future events, with associated marketing recommendations, for delivery during the period May-December 2017. A video will be produced for social media based around the pilot events

Best of Wales Ltd – Wales Glamping Experience - Legedary Glamping Wales

The project will develop a collection of “gold” standard clamping units 'that have been designed by Welsh architects/designers to create a Welsh hotel (i.e. a collection of units) totally unique and mobile. The ' pop up ' hotel will appear in 3 different locations over a period of 3 months (one a month) during 2017 - Year Welsh Legends. One of the main objectives of the project is to draw the world's attention to the wealth of Wales's landscape and character. The settings are all impressive and represents South, Mid and North Wales are equal.

Brecon Beacons Tourism Legendary Experiences in the Beacons

This proposal aspires to give visitors to the Brecon Beacons an authentic experience which celebrates Visit Wales' Year of Legends thematic year for 2017. The project will work with Brecon Beacons tourism trade and aims to support building Wales' reputation for unique culture, rich heritage and world class events and festivals in a new innovative way.

- Legendary Experiences - 5/6 “legendary” themed itineraries will be developed and promoted digitally, encouraging visitors to stay in the Brecon Beacons

Small World Theatre -Creative Cardigan

With the Cardigan Town Centre Partnership and Fforest, this pilot project aims to reinforce the Wales brand by providing innovative, attractive, creative and retail opportunities for visitors to engage within the Cardigan area in the last quarter of the Year of Adventure leading into the Year of Legends.

This project aims to attract high-yield and shoulder season visitors by providing activity that is not weather dependent and gives compelling reasons to visit Wales in the autumn and winter such as the following:

- Collaborative day-long events including “The Greatest Ghostly Adventure”. Young participants working with facilitators will transform a maritime heritage building into a spooky installation, costume making and promenade-style experience. Visitors join a procession at the end of the workshop over the river to join Fforest's Death Disco at the Pizza Tipi.
- A Cardigan Festive Fortnight including a grand scale lantern parade, attracting

<p>visitors and involving the community, a Christmas market in the Guildhall, fabulous fireworks and many other seasonal events.</p>	
<p>8 AOB/Closing remarks</p> <p>There were a number of suggestions for thematic years to follow the “Year of the Sea”, such as the Years of-The Wild, Food, Agriculture, Local.</p> <p>It was unanimously agreed that the Forum should meet three times per year.</p> <p>N.B. Date of next meeting: February 7th, Royal Welsh Showground, Builth Wells.</p> <p>All forum members should be emailing the regional team with your updates prior to the next meeting, a max 200 -300 words on what has been happening with in your sector/destination/body can you please send your updates by 12th January 2017</p>	