

WREXHAM TOURISM FORUM
Minutes of meeting held on Tuesday 29 January
Ramada Plaza, Wrexham

Present:	Darryl Shaw	DS	Rossett Hall
	Mike Kagan	MK	- Cross Lanes Hotel
	Nia Hollins	NH	- Tourism Officer
	Colin Hyde	CH	- Marketing & Communications Manager
	Ray Squire	RS	- Bluestone Cars
	Sue Kelly	SK	Open Churches Network
	Pat Bannon	PB	Ramada Plaza Hotel
	Gwyneth Forester	GF	Gresford TIP
	Della Brookshaw	DB	Plassey Craft Centre
	Sue Walton	SW	Plas Power Adventure
	Ian Walton	IW	Plas Power Adventure

		Action
1./	<p>Welcome and Apologies DS welcomed everyone and asked the group to introduce themselves. DS thanked PB for hosting the meeting.</p> <p>Apologies were received from Canon G Marshall - St Giles Church & Open Churches Network, Allan Forrest – Northern Marches Cymru Manager, Sue Kelly – Open Church Network, Mel Evans – Littleton B&B.</p>	
2./	<p>Chairman’s Update Please see attached report.</p> <p>The group requested to see a copy of the Open Churches Network presentation, as it has been recognised as best practise for community involvement.</p>	NH
3./	<p>Election of Officers Chair – CH nominated DS to stay as Chair, RS seconded this. Vice Chair – DS nominated MK to remain as Vice Chair, DB seconded it. Secretary } DS nominated WCBC to continue providing both. Treasurer }</p> <p>DS expressed that he would be keen to see more involvement by other members of the Tourism Forum if they wished. DS asked if the group were happy with the frequency and format of the meeting. CH advised that over 200 people are invited to attend the group and we have tried previously to change the structure of the meetings into activities, but we were struggling to get the representatives of the different sectors to the meetings. Minutes and information are passed on to all invitees.</p>	

		Action
	<p>Everyone was in agreement that the reason we don't get numbers to the forum is because people are not aware of what is achieved by this meeting. GF suggested having an information point at Tourism Forum events, DS suggested writing a few lines for the Tourism Connect to inform businesses of what goes on in the meetings and PB suggested a topical speaker may draw in the numbers, such as a speaker on the new Eagles Meadow complex.</p>	DS
4./	<p>Minutes of the Previous Meeting Minutes were agreed as a true record of the AGM meeting and the last WTF meeting.</p>	
5./	<p>Matters Arising Ski Slope MK asked for an update on the ski slope. CH informed that it had been agreed by Executive Board and the lease should be signed in late spring or early summer. The delay has been due to insurance issues which were subject to a long legal process. It has now got the go ahead subject to site investigations.</p> <p>Pontcysyllte World Heritage Bid CH explained that the nomination and supporting documents were sent to London on 21 December 2007 and signed by James Purnell, Culture Secretary on 4 January 2008. They were then sent to UNESCO in Paris, as the only submission for the United Kingdom in 2008. We are now awaiting the outcome of the UNESCO technical check to see if it has made it into the 45 nominations, which we should know by March. The timing is good as it could potentially allow joint heritage activity eg as part of the Olympic marketing initiatives.</p> <p>Tourism Signage DS enquired about the possibility of a project for signage under the Rural Development Plan. CH explained that the Rural Development Plan had been submitted with other plans across Wales, should hear end of March. This includes a Business Plan which covers detail projects. The umbrella of sense of place could allow for a future project in this area although it was also pointed out that a consultation on WOB signing across North Wales was underway.</p> <p>Accommodation Stock This was completed to a high standard. Details would be included in the next edition of Tourism Connect.</p> <p>Tourism Trade Survey NH reported that WCBC were disappointed with the returns, only 20 forms were received, after sending the forms out twice. To encourage a response, all returns were entered into a prize draw to win a free advert. RS advised he thought the form related to accommodation providers and there was nothing he could respond to. NH highlighted the five main areas which related to Wrexham Tourism Forum.</p> <p>DS and RS have experienced difficulty accessing the WTF page through the homepage. CH and NH advised that the full address is given out which will take you straight to the WTF page, there is nothing more that can be done as it is a WCBC site. DS requested that a few line be written to request whether people would like electronic or paper communication.</p>	NH ²

5./	<p>Golf Packages</p> <p>DS and Steve Williams have met up to discuss the potential for the golfing packages. SW is working hard to set this up. It was discussed that serious golfers like to complete warm-up courses as well as a major golf course. We are within travelling distance of both Wirral and Southport which have major course. Golfers would not see the travelling as an issue. Any Golf Clubs interested in becoming part of the cluster should get in touch. MK will get in touch with SW to see where we are up to.</p>	MK
6./	<p>Branding Update</p> <p>CH advised that the Vision workshop took place in November at Rossett Hall where they came up with a brand idea and concept. This has been signed off, but now needs to be agreed by members.</p> <p>A Members' workshop has been established and will meet in February. CH is hoping for their support so that it can be discussed with stakeholders to take forward. To develop into a full marketing approach funding will need to be secured from a variety of sources so it is key to gain Member buy-in at this point.</p> <p>Unfortunately, at the moment, CH has been asked by the Steering Group not to communicate the branding vision widely, but hopes to be able to disclose this information at the next meeting.</p>	
7./	<p>Business Tourism</p> <p>Subsequent to the issues we had as a group relating to North Wales Conferencing, CH and PB have attended a meeting. PB explained that this was a very difficult meeting with North Wales Conferences, as it was felt that their Members were putting them under pressure to only do conferencing for Conwy. They probably didn't want to support us but felt that they were stuck in the middle. The main issue we feel is that they would be reactive rather than proactive.</p> <p>We now need to do something ourselves and need to decide what form this will take, be it website, promotions, or desk. It was thought that a desk would be a little old fashioned.</p> <p>CH asked if PB and/or DS could attend the TPNW meeting on 19 February and write up a proposal before the next meeting. CH asked the group to keep in mind working in partnership with Flintshire. WCBC may have a small pot of money which WTF could use for match funding.</p>	DS/PB

8./	<p>Marketing Update</p> <p>NH informed the group that the Real Wrexham print is expected next week. This year NH has had to double the print due to demand. Please place orders if required.</p> <p>North Wales Borderlands (NWB) main guides were distributed in December, but we are re-designing the web-site to be in keeping with the brochure.</p> <p>In the separate attractions campaign the number of participating attractions has increased from 36 to 44. Group travel market and targeting schools are included in this year's campaign.</p> <p>There is a bid in to TPNW for £30k funding for NWB attractions, general profile raising and increasing partnership working with Visit Wales.</p> <p>NH requested feedback on any of the projects. She also informed that she is updating the print of the bedroom browsers, which are open to all trade and she will deliver.</p> <p>DS stated that the bedroom browsers are a little bulky for their rooms as they only have a small table and often find them on the floor. NH explained that they used the least bulky design, but browsers could be left in reception areas if there was an issue with space. This could be looked at in the future.</p> <p>The competition in Real Wrexham this year is focused on the Town Centre as there will be a lot of changes to the Town Centre.</p>	
9./	<p>Visit Wales Review</p> <p>CH reported on the review which is looking at the 3 strands of TGA areas, Marketing Areas and Destination Management. WCBC were active in ensuring engagement in the review being conducted on behalf of VW by the Tourism Company and urged trade members to make their views known. The timetable is relatively short with the report due for completion in June.</p> <p>DS advised the group that Visit Wales have revised their grants for businesses. There is now a Pan-Wales economic budget but with no direct funding specifically for tourism, but wants to make sure that tourism business apply for grants from the conversion pot.</p>	

10./	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>Web Solutions Web for you, web company. CH described it as an opportunity for businesses to come together as an area and advertise themselves. It was agreed that CH would invite them to the next meeting.</p> <p>TTFW DS attended the Gallu presentation and advised the group of grants that available for training. A CD is available to us. DS to give NH details to pass on.</p> <p>Royal Welsh Show North East Counties are holding the Royal Welsh Show. Wrexham and Denbighshire have committed to sponsoring this event to be held in July with Flintshire and Conwy positions currently unclear.</p> <p>Wrexham/Shropshire Railway Company Staff will be given a presentation on the tourism product of Wrexham. Trains will hold and display Wrexham literature.</p> <p>Familiarisation Visit Bryn Hughes has arranged a familiarisation visit for green and blue badge holders. Guides will be shown what Wrexham has to offer.</p> <p>St Davids Day St Davids day is on a Saturday this year and there will be a more high profile event this year. There will be 40 market stalls selling local produce, a sausage competition for local butchers and cookery displays. If anyone knows of any independent butchers that they think may want to enter, please advise them that Thursday 7 February is the deadline for applications. NH to e-mail MK an entry pack.</p> <p>Communication RS has put information on the discussion forum, but found it was quite complicated. Before the information is posted onto the discussion forum, the content has to be checked by the administrator which takes 24 hours; therefore people won't use it as a discussion forum. NH/CH are unable to rectify this as it a WCBC website and content needs to be checked.</p> <p>It was agreed that information will revert back to electronic and paper copies being sent out, and electronic reminders of the meetings.</p>	<p>CH</p> <p>DS</p> <p>NH</p>
11./	<p>Date and Time of Next AGM Meeting and Next WTF Meeting</p> <p>The next AGM meeting will be held on Thursday January 22 2009 at 10.30am. Venue to be confirmed.</p> <p>The next meeting will be held on Thursday 17 April at 10.30am.</p>	