

**Wrexham Tourism Forum - Chairman's report**  
**Tuesday, 28<sup>th</sup> November 2006**

On behalf of John Newton Jones, who tenders his apologies from today's AGM due to reasons of business, as vice chairman I will provide the chairman's report.

By way of introduction, the forum has met under various guises for over 20 years formed as a partnership between WCBC and the trade.

However this is the first year the Forum has operated under our current structure, a structure proposed at last year's AGM and one designed to recognise the synergy between interested groups and bodies be they community groups, the trade operators and WCBC. And as a fully constituted body the Forum is represented on several committees and boards across North Wales

Of course, one of the primary aims of the forum is to Talk Wrexham Up, a phrase honed in recognition to the transformation we have all seen to the town of Wrexham and we do all understand that a stronger local economy, leads to stronger local businesses.

At this point, I believe it is quite correct to make reference to the Tourism Growth Area. Awarded to Wrexham by the then WTB, and secured through the efforts of Del Morris Jones and Dawn Roberts. The achievement of the TGA has encouraged significant private sector investment into WX and the WX TGA is one of the success stories in the whole of Wales.

Also, while referring to economic success – I would also like to mention the STEAM model or the STEAM economic assessment model a project managed by WCBC – which many of us feed into and in 2005 it was calculated that Tourism was worth a little under £70m to the County of Wrexham – hope to see further advances in the future.

The reason that it is important to be able to quantify and measure the contribution of our industry to the economy is quite simply this

It provides a measurement in terms of value the industry has in its contribution to the economy of Wrexham - and, of course, the tourism infrastructure does not have the potential to relocate and its production cannot be transferred overseas – we are here on a more permanent footing so it will always be a significant element of the economy – and Wrexham has rightly recognised this.

The infrastructure of the industry continues to grow in the area and this year, we have seen the opening of the Ramada Plaza Hotel, and further investment is taking place to the areas other hotels and tourism business's - we also look forward to further expansion over the next 12 months with known projects coming on stream.

In the past year, we have enjoyed good attendance at our meetings, which is always important as it helps get a balance of views across all the sectors and for this reason, when we come to the election of officers we would like to keep the same balance to the membership and structure of the Forum.

May I thank all those active members of the forum who continue to make a positive contribution and to Colin and the team for their ongoing support in providing both the secretariat and treasurer to the Forum.

At this point I would like to draw the Forums attention to the many years of hard work, effort, energy and direction that John Newton Jones has invested into the tourism “project” that we now know both here in Wrexham and within North Wales. John has been a stalwart of the Forum and has become somewhat of a victim of his own business success outside the county but I am aware that John fully proposes to re-enter the leisure arena within the county in the near future,

Thank you