



Activities, Attractions & Events Group Meeting

Wednesday 5 June 2019

Cycl Experience, Brockenhurst

Attendees:

Adventure Wonderland – Janet Bentick
Beaulieu – Rachael Goldstraw
N F Classic Cars – Adam Gorgeon
Exbury Gardens – Celise Galloway
Escape Yachting – Matthew Lawson
Forest Forge Theatre – Sharon Lawless
Cycl Experience – Jon Thurnell-Read
GNF – Anthony Climpson
Hurst Castle – Rachel Lewis
Hurst Castle – Linda Scott
New Forest Activities – Matt Kitcher
New Forest Paddle Sport Co – Sean Scott
Paultons – Rob Griffiths
Sammy Miller Museum - Viv Brackett

Apologies:

Longdown Activity Farm – Liza Datlen
Minstead Trust – Matt Stroud
New Forest Heritage Centre – Jennifer Pressnell
New Forest Heritage Centre – Giles Gould
New Forest Platinum Tours – Steve Perry
Steamship Shieldhall – Nigel Philpott
The Horse Raft - Sally Bennetts
Eling Tide Mill – Helen Robinson
St Barbe Museum - Maria Ragan
Fuzzaker Walks – Steve Adams

1 Introductions and Apologies - as per the above lists

2 Actions Arising from previous meeting - The group still wanted to see more AAE social media posts, particularly on Instagram. It was noted that Rachael at GNF cannot spend her time wading through everyone's accounts so it was agreed to tag thenewforestuk whenever relevant posts were made by members. It would also be helpful if businesses could send Rachael interesting content so it could easily be re-purposed for the New Forest Instagram story feed.

3 The Following topics were discussed:

Members Updates: Generally a positive view for the year to date, although the recent half term had not performed as well as the Easter trading period. It was agreed this was because the weather was not as favourable as last year. However, Beaulieu, Hurst Castle and Sammy Miller Motorcycle Museum did report good half term trading.

4 Taster Day Update: Whilst the idea behind the event is good, unfortunately it didn't work for most participants. New Forest Paddle Board saw a split of 50/50 between walk in bookings and Taster bookings. With the exception of the Lymington Times, the press release was not taken up. Two short GNF reports covering a summary of promotion and review observations were circulated and are attached here for consideration of any future Taster Day development.

A lengthy discussion then took place on whether we should persist with the Taster Days or consider other approaches. Presence at local shows was discussed as was producing a more branded campaign that could potentially tie all day visitor activity together.

It was finally agreed that future promotion should focus on the destination's bigger picture by creating a campaign promoting the variety of attractions, events and activities in the forest alongside accommodation, food & drink, landscape, coastline, town & villages and other facilities. It was agreed that if all members could see the relevance to their own business they would put more effort into participation and sharing promotional social media and other communication activities. This would enable the wider membership to finally embrace the idea of "Coopetition" as identified in the GNF Business Plan circulated with the GNF Q1 Report

Exactly what that "something" was, remains elusive and given the success of the "It's closer than you think" destination video, further dynamic video content was suggested. It was agreed forth-coming brainstorm marketing workshop scheduled for the 3rd October would be a great opportunity to home in on what this specific campaign should be, and to use AAE meetings prior to the workshop to formulate thoughts and ideas that could be taken to the workshop.

Action: Next meeting on 4 Sept to start to identify what marketing activity is required.

5 Go New Forest Report and KPI's: AC referred to his Q1 report and shared the attached updated Destination Marketing Plan KPIs.

6 Review of 'It's closer than you think video': Discussion that took place earlier in the meeting showed that the feedback on the new video was extremely positive and it had been shared by around a third of the membership (higher than usual but still room for more people to engage and share this content). The video has had around 65,000 unique views to date.

7 Any Other Business: Matthew offered to take any ideas and thoughts to the Hotels group on behalf of the AAE group – this will be useful in the context of trying to create a more cohesive destination wide campaign at the brainstorm.

New Forest Business Partnership - lots of events coming up in the next month including a further LinkedIn Local event on the 19th June at the Balmer Lawn Hotel.

8 Dates of Next Meetings:

Wednesday 4 September at 12 noon – Exbury Gardens

Wednesday 6 November at 12 noon – Forest Forge Theatre, Ringwood