



**Notes from the Wiltshire Association of Visitor Attractions Meeting
Thursday 10 October 2019**

Present:;

Roz Mitchell, Salisbury Cathedral, Fiona Errington, VisitWiltshire; Rachel Wheeler, Marlborough College Summer School, Loz Samuels, DOCA, Jane Thomas, Stonehenge, David Hanglethorn, Hillbrush, Nat McConnell, Cholderton rare Breeds Farm/ Bluestone Vineyard, Laura, Farm Cookery School, Martin Harvey, Royal Artillery Museum, Donna Bennett, Larmer Tree, David Dawson, Emma, Wiltshire Museum

Welcome and Thank You: Roz welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked Wiltshire Museum for hosting.

Introductions and How's Business: Attendees introduced themselves and provided a brief update on 2019 performance to date. Business in the last few months has been mixed according to the type of business, and how the rain and weather has affected them. Salisbury businesses reported an increase on 2018, but most still down on 2017.

Presentation from Unstuck Design

Unstuck design gave a presentation highlighting trends in social media and use of Instagram for visitor attractions. Presentation is attached.

Sharing of Market Intelligence

Update: It was agreed that, due to the variance in ways of reporting, and the different types of business this was not workable and it was agreed to drop the idea of recording numbers, however all agreed the type of intelligence that could be shared amongst the group included: -

- Findings from any market research carried out
- Information on competitor analysis
- Notable shifts in marketing habits
- Audience Development
- Event programming – new learnings - successes, new categories, ticketing, visitor management flow
- Environmental / Green solutions / issues

Roz outlined 3 areas that have impacted the Cathedral over the past few months: -

1. Google Ad words grant – if you are a charity you can apply for up' to \$10,000 USD funding for google ad words – they have been successful – took 3 months to apply/ get it going but worth it. They are using an agency to manage the ad words.
2. Drift away from big groups – aware of the impact that this will have on future marketing activity and how to reach the right audience.

Stonehenge mentioned that they had seen a shift with a rise in people buying online tickets so they are now putting more efforts into OTA.

The Farm Cookery School highlighted that people are looking for bespoke courses not things off the shelf.

3. Collaboration – working in partnership with more businesses around the city and selling the city rather than just the Cathedral.

Environmental / Green discussion took place – discussed electric charging points for electric cars, Roz informed the group that there is free funding available for charging points. Marlborough Summer School noted that there had been an increase in comments on their questionnaires about the environmental issues such as charging points, use of plastic. Loz advised that there is toolkit that they downloaded that made them think about what they were doing - <https://www.culturedeclares.org/>. The Cathedral are working towards a gold eco award they currently have a silver one.

Update on VisitWiltshire Activity from Fiona Errington

Campaigns

- Our Autumn campaign launched middle of September - Activity includes a mix of digital integrated activity and lead generation.
- Future campaigns - Work will start of the Wiltshire food and drink campaign in the New Year and the Salisbury campaign will follow in March 2020.

Website

- Helen Dalton is the new Online & Digital Executive helendalton@visitwiltshire.co.uk Please contact Helen with any web queries or updates
- For June to end of Sept 2019 combined (Wiltshire and Salisbury) websites had over 450k users, which is 8% increase on the same period in 2018. August was very strong - year on year, traffic was up 18% across VisitWiltshire and VisitSalisbury combined, making this the best month ever for traffic with over 140k users during the month
- Consistently over the year the What's on page is within our top 3 ranking pages, to amplify this we have added new content to this page – what's on this weekend, what's on this week, what's on this month. PLEASE DON'T FORGET TO ADD YOUR EVENTS USING THE EVENTS FORM <https://www.visitwiltshire.co.uk/whats-on/event-form>
- Who is using the websites? Across August and September, **60% of users** were female, and we saw a **wide spread of age ranges** using the website. Users stayed for an average of **1 minute 18 seconds** and looked at an average of **1.7 pages** during their visit.

Social Media

- As at the end of September 2019 our Twitter followers stood just under 25.5k, Facebook at just over 19.6k, Instagram followers just under 12.9k. Total followers are 57.9k. Instagram has a 37% increase in followers year on year with 7% increase for Facebook and 4% increase for Twitter.

PUBLICATIONS

- **FINAL FINAL** call out for 2020 Visitor Map and Visitor Guide – if you haven't already booked **we are taking final bookings by the end of next week**. Please contact Billy – Billygrimes@visitwiltshire.co.uk
- Publications will be out early January

PR – New PR & Communications Manager - Holly Windsor Hollywindsor@visitwiltshire.co.uk

- Since January we have had 50 pieces of coverage with 73.4 million online readership and 147k coverage views
- Please contact Holly with any news worthy stories and events.

Travel Trade

- Opportunities are now out for 2020 exhibitions if you are interested please contact Flo (
- Great West Way Marketplace event, 21–24 November – if you are interested in working with the trade book on - £125 per table
- We are working with over 60 Great West Way Official Tour Operators

TRAINING

Photography for Social Media – 27 November Venue TBC

First Aid – Dec – Date TBC

Google analytics - Jan Date TBC

If anyone would be happy to host any of our training workshops please contact Billy.

Don't forget to look out for our fortnightly partner newsletter and monthly marketing update

Great West Way

The Ambassador network has over 240 businesses signed up. We are currently working on second edition of Great West Way Travel magazine and a new food and drink map. If you are interested in featuring in either please contact Fiona.

Any Other Business:

Fiona announced that Roz is stepping down from the role of Chair and thanked her. If anyone is interested or would like to find out more about being the Chair for the WAVA group please contact Fiona.

Also, if anyone has any ideas or suggestions for relevant speakers for WAVA Meetings please let Fiona know.

Dates of Next Meeting

TBA (January or Feb 2020)