



Visit Chichester Annual Report Half Year Update 01 April 2019 to 31 August 2019

Executive Summary

- Francis Hobbs replaced Craig Gershater as Acting Chairman on 7th July 2019.
- David Coultard, the Communar at Chichester Cathedral, joined the Board on 8th July 2019.
- Key issues and initiatives approved by the Board in the current period:
 - Chichester BID financial support is now a contractual arrangement based on specific projects. This provides less financial security but does ensure Visit Chichester can demonstrate value more easily.
 - The introduction of a new Visit Chichester Membership scheme - launch 17th September 2019.
 - Directors and staff to hold key meetings with senior managers at the 'top 20' organisations in the District to generate marketing partnerships.
 - Updating the website and a new accommodation booking widget via Meon Travel and Goodwood.
 - Exploring the possible appointment of Patrons, and Advisory Board members to provide greater commercial support.
 - Planning a workshop for selected Councillors and Officers.
 - Seeking a partnership with Chichester University for students to gain work experience and other academic value by supporting Visit Chichester activities.
 - Seek the appointment of Tourism Ambassadors in Parishes and linking student support to each.
- New marketing initiatives:
 - **English Tourism Week** (30th March – 7th April) resulting in over 190 sign ups to the Visit Chichester e-newsletter, website visits up 31%
 - **Roman Week** campaign on social media during May half term which resulted in 106 new Facebook likes and a 6% increase in reach
 - **Chichester Walking Weekend**, in association with the Ramblers Association South West Sussex, to showcase the region as a great destination for walking. Taking place 6th – 8th September

- **Secret Chichester** to promote our hidden-gem-of-a-city to London commuters. 6-sheet posters will be displayed across 50 in the South West Railway network from two weeks from 21st October. The “Secret...” theme will be repeated for other towns and selected villages within the District in due course.

Overview

Visit Chichester has been through a challenging period over the last 6 months.

The Destination Management Plan commissioned in 2018 provided a good benchmark from which to develop further improvements for tourism in the District. However, the scale of its recommendations meant Visit Chichester had to consider carefully how to convert words into action. At the same time the Chichester BID board, a shared investor in Visit Chichester, became nervous that they were not getting the value their members expected. Therefore, they decided they could no longer support the agreed service level agreement and converted it into a supplier model, over which they felt they had greater commercial control.

The Visit Chichester board had no option but to reconsider what could be achieved within its current known funding. It was also decided that the Executive Chairman's role was not delivering what was expected. Craig Gershater's contract was terminated and Francis Hobbs was asked to take on the role of acting Chairman until a long term replacement could be found. This has necessarily put an emphasis on the office team to take on greater levels of autonomy and executive control. So far this has been a success.

Having stabilised the situation, Visit Chichester can maintain its current operations until March 2019 without the need for further external funding. Should the new relationship with BID work as anticipated, and the reworked membership scheme, allied to the brochure, produce expected levels of income, then Visit Chichester is stable as an organisation. But, to grow, it will require further sources of income or support in kind.

The board are now actively seeking to generating commercial relationships with other organisations in the District and finding professional input from volunteers and students to amplify Visit Chichester's impact on the tourism economy.

Management & Staffing

- Craig Gershater's post of Executive Chairman became Chairman on 18 March 2019. Mr Gershater ceased his employment with Visit Chichester on 07 July 2019.
- The vacant post was filled by Director Francis Hobbs as Acting Chairman until the end of current fiscal year on 31 March 2020, unless a long term replacement can be found in the meantime.
- Louise Adlam (Destination Marketing Executive) and Helen Bloom (Marketing Executive) both based at the Novium in Tower Street, continue to work, part

time, three days per week. With support from selected Directors Louise and Helen have begun the process of creating “The Executive” to carry out much of the operational and industry fundraising activities. Visit Chichester would like to find an early way to provide an office resourced for five days. As a first step it may be possible to provide telephone/email cover during normal working hours every day of the week.

- Richard Cole, the Company Secretary, based at the Registered Office, continues to oversee governance - official record keeping, finance and HR controller.

Visit Chichester Board of Directors

- The current board consists of:
 - Francis Hobbs – Acting Chairman/CDC representative
 - Colin Hicks – Chichester BID chair and representative – who will stand down in due course
 - Olaf Gueldner- Goodwood
 - Nicola Jones – Chair of Petworth Vision
 - David Coulthard – The Communar at Chichester Cathedral – who joined on 08 July 2019
- The board is seeking two further directors, at least one of whom should be based/represent the views of those on the Peninsula.
- Ruth Poyner resigned as a director on 01 July 2019

Destination Management Plan (DMP)

The Destination Management Plan (attached to the Annual Report dated March 2019) provides a basis for future aspirations and activities, but many of its proposals did not take into account the limited resources available to Visit Chichester in the short to medium term. For completeness, the following key elements were highlighted and are repeated as a baseline in this document. The key statistics will be used to measure improvements over time, and demonstrate both success and value for money as required in the CDC Service Level Agreement.

- District Tourism mapping
- Consultations with key stakeholders
- Developing product marketing themes and a workflow summary
- Continuing Economic Impact Data reports – the next is due at the end of 2020 for 2019
 - The key numbers from the report (last full year available 2017) are:
 - **7.5 million trips** were undertaken
 - **6.9 million** day trips
 - **0.6 million** overnight visits
 - **2.2 million nights** in the area as a result of overnight trips
 - **£334.8 million** spent by tourists during their visit to the area
 - **£27.9 million** spent on average in the local economy every month
 - **£145.7 million** generated by overnight visits

- **£189.1 million** generated from day trips
- **£429.1 million** spent in the local area as a result of tourism (taking into account multiplier effects)
- **8,392 jobs** supported, both for local residents and from those living nearby
- **6,595 tourism jobs** directly supported
- **1,797 non-tourism related jobs** supported (linked to multiplier spend from tourism)
- **14.2% of population** employed as a result of tourism in Chichester

Key statistics for context between 2015 and 2017 are:

Visitor Economy Dashboard	Chichester District 2015	Chichester District 2017 *verification required
Total Visitors	6,171,000	~7,500,000
Total Day Trips	5,657,883	~6,916,000
Total Overnight Trips	571,053	588,445
Total Economic Value	~£411,400,000	(£429,106,000)*
Number jobs supported	~8,037	~8,392
Total Day Trip Spend	~£189,200,000	~£189,061,000
Total Overnight Spend	~£132,282,000	£145,708,811

It's also pertinent that the accommodation audit completed at the end of 2018 suggests that the District could benefit from more accommodation, particularly for key major events during the year. This may be limiting overall visitor income:

Category	Establishments	Bed spaces
Hotels/Motels	13	1153
Guest Houses/B&B	107	660
Inns	29	388
Self-Catering	296	2,006
Glamping	6	178
Group/ Hostel	2	725
Caravan and Camping/Holiday Centre (inc Scouts)	45	19,030
Total Audited Stock	498	24,140
AirBnB estimate (90%)*	844	3,376
Total with AirBnB	1,342	27,516

Understanding occupancy rates and their impact on visitor spend is a key task for which Visit Chichester may seek additional funding. An alternative could be to offer projects to students studying in local educational establishments.

Marketing Initiatives and statistics showing growth

Marketing initiative highlights

Campaigns

- Visit Chichester ran a successful campaign for **English Tourism Week** (30th March – 7th April) resulting in over 190 sign ups to the Visit Chichester e-newsletter, website visits up 31% (versus the previous two weeks), over 240 new Facebook likes, an 814% increase in Facebook reach and 2,293% increase in Facebook engagement (vs the previous week).
- We ran a successful **Roman Week** campaign on social media during May half term which resulted in 106 new Facebook likes and a 6% increase in reach, vs the previous week.
- We are organising the first ever **Chichester Walking Weekend**, in association with the Ramblers Association South West Sussex, to showcase the region as a great destination for walking. Taking place 6th – 8th September with over 15 different guided walks across the South Downs, City and along the Coast.
- Visit Chichester are working on a new campaign, entitled **Secret Chichester** to promote our hidden-gem-of-a-city to London commuters. 6-sheet posters will be displayed across 50 in the South West Railway network from two weeks from 21st October. This will be supplemented with targeted online activity.

Events

- We attended the **Goodwood Festival of Speed**, showcasing all our region has to offer to the 100,000 plus guests attending the four-day event.
- Our new Membership Scheme will be unveiled at a **networking evening**, hosted by Visit Chichester on the evening of 17th September at The Guildhall in Priory Park. We hope up to 100 local operators will be joining us.

Web and PR

- Visit Chichester are offer travel **PR services** on behalf of the district through our new subscription to Travmedia, allowing us to issue press releases, respond to media requests and contact travel journalists direct.
- We are making updates to the Visit Chichester **shopping directory**, to ensure all Chichester shops are up-to-date.

Website and Social Media Statistics

The following statistics show good growth in a number of key areas – and will be shown in graphical form in future reports.

Website

Number of page users:

- 23,169 in July
- 19,000 in June (last report)
- 11,000 in January 2019

Social Media

Facebook likes:

- 1,719 at end of July
- 1,413 at end of June (last report)
- 611 November 2018

Twitter followers:

- 6,656 followers at end of July
- 6,604 at end of June (last report)
- 6,438 November 2018

Instagram followers:

- 1,422 followers at end of July
 - 1,341 end of June (last report)
- 1,014 November 2018

E-NEWSLETTER SUBSCRIBERS

- 9,515 subscribers during 2019

Looking Ahead

- Visit Chichester needs and is rebuilding its brand so that it gains universal support across the District.
- The Visit Chichester relationship with BID has been developed into a supplier relationship, with services paid for specific activities. The first key contract has now been signed and will be used as a model for future activity, not only with BID, but also other interested organisations in the District.
- Within current resources Visit Chichester is focusing on face to face and web based social media networking to rebuild brand trust.
- The launch of the new Membership Scheme on 17th September is a key platform on which to build confidence with key tourist organisations.
- Local tourist organisations have asked for a “community” and sense of belonging, and Visit Chichester will build on this through social media groups.
- A workshop entitled Taking England to the World organised with Visit Britain and Google is scheduled to take place in the District on 29th October. Up to 80 participants from across West Sussex are expected to attend this one day event aimed at increasing overseas visits into the District.
- Visit Chichester is now actively developing deeper relationships with:
 - Experience West Sussex (WSSC)
 - Coastal West Sussex
 - The Harbour Conservancy Trust
 - The Manhood Peninsula Partnership
 - South Downs National Park
 - Meon Travel
 - Visit England
 - Visit Britain
 - Chichester Chamber of Commerce
 - England’s Heritage Cities 20 historic centres working to bring overseas travel writers and travel trade buyers to members destinations for familiarisation
- The “Leaflet Exchange” is being developed into a dynamic tourism exhibition that appeals to local people and national buyers.
- Engaging Chichester University with the opportunity for specific projects and support for social media activities. This could be expanded to other educational establishments. This may include a competition to create a new website, and accelerate social media activity.
- Asking all Parishes in the District to appoint a Tourism Ambassador and exploring whether Visit Chichester could sponsor a student supporter to each to audit tourism assets and what they need to enhance their tourism value proposition.

Service Level Agreement with Chichester District Council for 2019/2020 – Review August 2019.

Service Level Agreement Chichester District Council and Visit Chichester LTD Dated 1 March 2019 to 31st March 2020

Chichester District Council (CDC) has considerable tourism assets which historically have always made the District an attractive place to visit and tourism already generates significant direct expenditure and is the largest private sector employer. Tourism is supported by the Council in its Corporate Plan, its Local Plan and through the Economic Development Strategy. However, considering the share of market already being captured by other South Coast destinations there is a substantial untapped year-round opportunity to attract visitors for holidays and short breaks in the Chichester area. CDC have agreed to work in partnership with Visit Chichester (VC), committing £50,000 pa for five years to assist in facilitating a strong Destination Management Organisation in order to:

- Raise the profile of the District as a visitor destination
- Manage the visitor economy
- Exploit the economic potential to create jobs
- Develop a successful year-round tourism offer
- Exploit the potential for inward investment to the District

Visit Chichester as an essential part of the SLA for 2018-2019 produced a Destination Management Plan (DMP) providing a comprehensive assessment of the Visitor Economy of the Chichester District and an associated 'Action Plan' for objectives through to 2023. The DMP Action Plan provided four priority areas for the DMO and partners to focus resource on, these include:

- i. **Stakeholder Engagement:** identifying new 'partners' and developing communications and networking structures
- ii. **Place-making, Identity and Product:** assist in Brand delivery, and showcase core products including special events (weddings)
- iii. **Targeted Consumer Engagement:** align key visitor segments with marketing initiatives, develop product themes appropriate to segments.
- iv. **Amplify the message:** deliver targeted PR messages, develop closer relationships with travel trade and third-party websites.

The latest data available on 'The Economic Impact of Tourism on Chichester District' (Cambridge Model and associated Accommodation Audit) was completed in January 2019 and provides data for January to December 2017. This Baseline data, where available has been provided below for information. Unfortunately, due to the timescale of data being made available, (13 months in arrears) we are unable in the short term to measure the impact of Visit Chichester's work in this period against this data. Future years will allow retrospective analysis to take place against this dataset.

Actions	Activity	Baseline Data	Measurements	Target Date for Review	Progress Report
1. Increase number of day visitors to the district.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop a product portfolio for the district. 2. Deliver targeted marketing campaigns throughout the year. 3. Develop campaign/s to promote shoulder season (October/November, February/March). 4. Work with Chichester District Council and cultural partners to ensure a linked-up events strategy is developed and promoted. 	2017 data identified 6.916m day visitors	<p>Cambridge Tourism Economic Impact Model 2018</p> <p>Four product portfolios developed in relation to the three market segments as defined in the DMP</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Six marketing campaigns, such as English Tourism Week, Easter, Roman Week, walking festival 2. Campaigns developed and promoted to promote shoulder seasons 3. Support events strategy development and promotion 		See main report of activities. On track to meet all measured objectives by end of this year.
2. Increase the number of overnight visitors to the district.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Targeted activity to drive overnight visits at specific times of the year. 2. Launch seasonal digital activity through targeted social activity. 3. Develop a bank of content and 	2017 data identified 588,445 overnight visitors	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cambridge Tourism Economic Impact Model 2018 (data for 2018 only available in Q1'2020). 2. Eight themed itineraries to 		Further investment probably needed to gain real value.

	itineraries based on theme and audience		be developed.		
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3. Increase day visitor spend and dwell time	1. Develop partnerships between tourism partners to package offers in the district to encourage increased dwell time and spend within the district.	2017 data identified £189,061,000 spend for day visitors			This to be expanded to other partners based on success. Further funding may be required to provide greater statistical evidence of success
4. Deliver a strong and distinctive tourism brand	1. Work with Chichester District council and Chichester Vision to develop a place brand and associated tourism brand for the district.				Ongoing – some concern over the Visit Chichester name but working to find innovative solutions universally supported such as a range of marketing brands based around “Secret...” so “Secret Chichester”, “Secret Selsey”, etc.
5. Work in partnership to create a healthy visitor economy	1. Develop a communications and networking structure to share insights, explore training opportunities and encourage district wide working. 2. Hold 4 tourism events per annum to include leaflet		1. Database of interested parties to be developed and newsletter promoted. Work closely with CDC Economic Development Team to		Ongoing, with new membership scheme being launched on 17 Sep 19

	<p>exchange.</p> <p>3. Sustainability of DMO through development of membership scheme.</p> <p>4. Production of 2020 visitor guide.</p>		<p>provide co-ordinated and complimentary training opportunities for the tourism sector.</p> <p>2. Four tourism events held within the district during the year.</p> <p>3. Following launch of Membership Scheme (Q2'19) and test marketing, numbers of new memberships to be agreed.</p> <p>4. Guide to be produced for 2020</p>		
6. Improve online presence	<p>1. Review current image stock and develop this further.</p> <p>2. Review and develop Visit Chichester Website and links to wider platforms.</p> <p>3. Social media</p>	<p>Baseline data provided by VC.</p> <p>Data as of March'19</p> <p>Twitter 6,527 followers,</p> <p>Facebook 975 likes,</p> <p>Instagram 1,231 followers</p> <p>Visit Chi Website 13,000 visits</p>	<p>1. Development of image content both by Visit Chichester and partner images.</p> <p>2. Further development of Visit Chichester Website</p> <p>3. 7,000 twitter followers (March'19)</p> <p>-Seek a 50% increase in 'likes' Facebook.</p> <p>-Seek a 50%</p>		<p>Need further investment if website is to be fit for purpose.</p> <p>Increased social media presence achieved</p>

			increase in 'likes' Instagram. -Create a LinkedIn account		
7. Review and Governance Arrangements	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide to Chichester District Council on a quarterly basis a report to provide an update on activity and measures for the Service Level Agreement. 2. Provide and present an annual Report in June each year to Chichester District Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee. 3. Methods to record and monitor tourism data locally to be agreed through partnership working. This would provide a method of monitoring the impact Visit Chichester are having on the district. 		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Quarterly Update reports received on discussed on quarterly basis to identify activity within the period and measures against the SLA targets. 2. Report to June OSC to report annual review of previous year's activity. 		Report as agreed