

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

meeting date: 15 JUNE 2023
title: TOURISM PROGRESS REPORT – MAJOR PROMOTIONAL EVENTS
submitted by: NICOLA HOPKINS DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & PLANNING
principal author: TOM PRIDMORE, TOURISM AND EVENTS OFFICER

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To present a follow up report to the Tourism Update, presented to the last committee on the promotional events attended.
- 1.2 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities:
- Community Objectives – To sustain a strong and prosperous Ribble Valley
 - Corporate Priorities - To encourage economic development throughout the borough, with specific focus on tourism.
 - Other Considerations – To develop, with relevant partners, measures to support the visitor economy.

2 UPDATE

Background

- 2.1 At the last meeting of this committee members requested a follow up report on tourism promotional activity, with specific reference to events attended, the way the Council works with others and the type of leads collected.
- 2.2 This past year the Council has had representation at three major tourism events, each with a different purpose to reach different target markets - 'Destinations Holiday Show' at Manchester, 'National Outdoor Expo' at NEC Birmingham and 'British Travel and Tourism Show' at NEC Birmingham.
- 2.3 In summary, 'Destinations Holiday Show' in Manchester is a consumer show which attracts an audience of direct profile of relevant customers in our existing market, i.e., people seeking quality day or short breaks, with walking and food appeal. The 'National Outdoor Expo' is more aspirational seeking to strengthen our market presence in relation to consumers seeking holidays based around outdoor experiences, walking, cycling etc. Finally, the 'British Travel and Tourism Show' is a trade show attracting business representatives such as group travel organisers, coach operators, travel writers, bloggers etc. – i.e., a more complementary professional audience.
- 2.4 The ability for the council's tourism promotion team to be able to attend such major tourism promotion events is reliant on collaborations with others, firstly to make attendance cost effective but also to add value to the product. Collaboration can take many forms dependant on the event. For example, the National Outdoor Expo is ideal for Ribble Valley businesses with an interest in expanding into the fast-growing market of environmentally aware consumers seeking countryside experiences. By contrast 'the British Travel Tourism Show is about working across boundaries with other private and public sector partners recognising that group travel organisers usually plan itineraries beyond administrative boundaries. For example, coach parties staying in

Leyland, where there might be preferable accommodation will visit Ribble valley as one of their day visits whilst conversely a group staying in Ribble Valley will not want to be restricted in spending every day of their itinerary here.

- 2.5 In recent years, and in the absence of any county base organisation taking the lead, Ribble Valley has led on some of these promotions, funded by private sector businesses and public sector neighbours. The following is a summary of the three aforementioned events with an indication of the collaborations as well as the results.

British Travel Trade Show - March 2023

2.6 Attendance at this event involved funding/collaboration with –

- Ribble Valley Tourism Association
- Lancaster City Council
- Two independent Ribble Valley tourism operators
- Four Lancashire based tourism businesses.
- One Craven based attraction

- 2.7 Attached at Appendix One is a summary of contacts made which are currently being followed up. There were a further twenty-three leads where the business/interest is not identifiable but still merits follow up.

National Outdoor Expo - March 2023

2.8 Attendance at his event involved funding/collaboration with -

- Eco – Escapes Initiative (Forest of Bowland AONB)
- Four independent Ribble Valley attractions/retail
- One Ribble Valley country house hotel
- Three Ribble Valley country Inns
- Three Ribble Valley glamping/camping sites

Destinations - January 2023

- 2.9 As mentioned previously, Destinations is a public show, high volume, and high relevance. It was attended in collaboration with one major Ribble Valley business which provided funding and manpower. At the event more than 1,000 consumer requests were received for more information.

Data collection and sharing

- 2.10 Collaborations begin with an open invitation to potential partners, via the Ribble Valley Tourism business newsletter or direct communications. As part of the collaboration, public and private sector partners feature in a bespoke brochure produced for the event and are also included in display material. They also receive copies of all data of contacts / potential visitors, which is gathered and shared in accordance GDPR regulations.

3 ISSUES

There are no issues to note. The purpose of the report is to note the progress being made in promoting tourism.

4 RISK ASSESSMENT

The approval of this report may have the following implications.

- Resources – The cost of promotional activities are contained within existing budgets, supported by private and other Local Authorities contributions.

- Technical, Environmental and Legal – None in the context of this report
- Reputation – The Council is an active contributor in terms of strategic and operational tourism service.
- Equality and Diversity – None

5 **CONCLUSION**

Progress in Tourism will continue to be reported to future meetings of this committee.

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NICOLA HOPKINS
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BACKGROUND PAPERS None

For further information, please contact Tom Pridmore 01200 414496

Appendix 1 Summary of leads

Company	Trade interest in Ribble Valley
Independent Operator	Brings groups to Blackpool and wants new day ideas for day trips
Bolton attraction	Keen for local content for tourism website
Independent Operator	Organises trip for real ale enthusiasts
Independent Operator	Organises residential training experiences for companies
Voyage Content	Digital content agency and travel influencer
Group organiser	Group organiser seeking packages itineraries and prices
Group organiser	Group organiser seeking packages itineraries and prices
Doncaster TIC	Doncaster TIC seeking brochures for area
Coach company Derbyshire	Coach Company seeking packages itineraries and prices
Coach travel company	Company already using area, seeking itineraries for days out
Care group from Wirral	Itineraries for days out
Luxury travel agent	Seeking luxury breaks
Cardiff University	Seeking ideas for authentic English short breaks for overseas students
Airway company	Airport Manager
Tourist Network	Videographer
Independent organiser of days out for children	Website manager seeking content for family attractions
Tourism website manager	Website manager seeking content for popular tourism website
Lancashire Transport	Bus company selling days out
Group organiser for rail enthusiasts	Seeking rail excursions
Independent travel agent	Tour operator for inbound groups from China seeking authentic English experiences
Independent	Exchange company

Travel blogger	Would like more information to be able write about the area
Independent	Specialist tour operator for Chinese groups
Tour company	Group organiser seeking packages itineraries and prices, including accommodation
Yorkshire Coach company	Keen to have specific information on bluebell/snowdrop visits plus heritage attractions
Cumbrian Coach company	Wants to start bringing day trips from town in Cumbria – various ages
Group Organiser Birmingham	Requests group rates at hotels plus ideas for day trips in the area
Luxury travel agent (domestic)	Purveyors of Luxury Experiences looking for new locations
Independent Operator	Bespoke Chinese tour company seeking English destination experiences for small luxury groups
Lodge Park Chorley	Would like days out itineraries in Lancashire and promotional literature for hotel
Walking website	Requests all walking routes to post on their website
Independent Operator	Organises walking breaks for small Chinese groups
Independent Operator	Seeking ideas for days out for children