

Cotswold Edge & Severn Vale Tourism Network - UPDATE

The Steering Group

At the Network meeting in January 2017 it was agreed that a small Steering Group would meet to look more closely at a Tourism Strategy for the area and steer the overall direction of work on behalf of the Network. This group has been meeting regularly, working on many of the things mentioned in this update.

The Name

The Steering Group considered the results of the online survey and research work surrounding the brand name for the area so far.

It was agreed that the Steering Group would recommend that the Network use *Cotswold Edge & Severn Vale*. This had come out on top following the online survey. A review of its use as a brand name will be carried out in October. Over the season feedback data will be collected using aligned set questions, to help with the review process.

Sharing Information across the Network

In the absence of a dedicated website, an area has been set up on the Dursley Town Council website to share information across the Network until a longer term solution is in place.

Go to www.dursleytowncouncil.gov.uk

Click on 'Community'

Click on 'Cotswold Edge & Severn Vale Tourism Network'



You can access the minutes of meetings, strategy information, reports, downloadable lists and the parish by parish inventory templates. This area will continue to be built up. You are also very welcome to share events on the Council's 'What's on' online calendar.

Research & Project Work

In January 2017 the consultants, Harris Ethical, offered to carry out some research work for the Network, linked to wider transport work being carried out in the County. Harris Ethical came back with some suggestions and small scale mini projects to help support tourism and access to key trip destinations from the Cam and Dursley Rail Station.

The project suggestions were considered by the Steering Group and as a result Go Travel Solutions conducted a feasibility study for a taxi sharing scheme operating to and from the Cam and Dursley station along a circular route encompassing major attractions.

The work was carried out at no cost to the Network. The Study Report is available on the Cotswold Edge & Severn Vale Tourism Network section of Dursley Town Council's website. The results and recommendations will be shared and discussed at the next Tourism Network meeting.

The Strategy & Action Plan

The Steering Group has been working on a Tourism Strategy and Action Plan for the area. This work also includes drafting a Constitution for the Network.

These draft documents will be shared and discussed at the next Tourism Network meeting. They will also be available on the Cotswold Edge & Severn Vale Tourism Network section of Dursley Town Council's website.

The Parish by Parish Inventory

The Network is undertaking a parish by parish inventory to record potential unique selling points and tourist related information across the area. The information will help the Network to create links and potentially create packages. A downloadable blank template is available on the Cotswold Edge & Severn Vale Tourism Network section of Dursley Town Council's website. Completed templates will be shared on the website in the near future.

Thank you to those who have supplied information. So far we have completed templates from Wotton-under-Edge, Hinton and Dursley.

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Other Tourism News

Royal Gloucestershire Tourism Facebook

Back in January 2017 the Network was made aware of a new Facebook Page that had been set up to promote the area.

www.Facebook.com/RoyalGloucestershireTourism

Please go and have a look, you can contact the page administrator, Gordon Craig, directly via the page.

Other Tourism News

News from Sara Chardin & Shirley Wood

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There will soon be an opportunity for tourism related businesses to advertise in the Cotswolds Visitor Guide 2018. The new, handy A5 size guide will have an increased distribution of up to 200,000 copies as well as additional downloads. As well as being sent out to visitors nationally and internationally to help them plan their holiday in advance, it will, for the first time, also be distributed locally to inspire visitors who are already here in the destination.

There is a Cotswolds Huddle taking place at Cowley Manor near Cheltenham on 20th June at 11.30am. This networking event is organised by Cotswolds Concierge and open to small businesses in the Cotswolds to attend. But this one in particular, the 'Super' huddle, will be attended by Cotswolds Tourism giving an update on what they have been up to.

It is free to attend.

<http://www.cotswoldsconcierge.co.uk/the-cotswolds-huddle/>

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We received some feedback from a parish meeting, that people thought accommodation businesses still need to have a star rating from the AA or Visit England in order to be promoted by local authorities and Tourist Information Centres. This is no longer the case, but in order to be promoted on our tourism website www.visitthecotswolds.org.uk and take bookings from Stroud Tourist Information Centre (the only official networked TIC in the district), accommodation businesses must sign the Cotswolds Tourism accommodation charter. This self-certifies they meet the relevant regulations.

We are keen to promote festivals and events all over the district this summer. Event organisers can add their events for free to our What's On page www.visitthecotswolds.org.uk/whats-on. Click the submit an event link to add your event information. Please note that we can only publicise events in the Stroud District, and that it is up to our discretion whether we think the event is relevant to visitors.

If you would like to add our Discover Stroud District film to your parish or business websites to spread the word about our beautiful district, please let us know and we can send you the link to embed. Watch the film at www.visitthecotswolds.org.uk/film or click on the link below our signature. The film has had an incredible response and has been watched from all different points on the globe.

Funding Opportunities

The RDPE Growth Programme (Rural Tourism) deadline for expressions of interest is midnight 31 January 2018.

The programme is offering grants for capital investments that will help grow and develop tourism in rural areas. The aim is for visitors to spend more time and money in the rural parts of the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) area.

For more information go to www.gov.uk/government/publications/rdpe-growth-programme and

www.gfirstlep.com