**Visit Isle of Wight Ltd**

**Report to the Board of Directors from the Managing Director, Will Myles – Executive Summary**

**12th September 2019**

**Introduction**

The purpose of this document is to collate and reports the relevant operational and strategic elements of the Visit Isle of Wight Limited activities.

It will be formed of the following different sections:

1. Matters arising from the previous board meeting on 27th June2019
2. Website and Voluntary contribution sales YTD
3. GDPR and IT
4. Travel Press and PR impact / report
5. IOW / Industry Press and PR impact / report
6. Access fund projects
7. Website statistics and development
8. Brand Marketing activities
9. Campaign Marketing activities
10. Social Media
11. Travel Trade and Exhibitions
12. BID activities, funding and 2018 / 19
13. Visitor Information Centre
14. Finance & Governance
15. **Matter arising from the previous board meeting**
    1. **Access Fund replacement** – as previously stated this is an on-going project which lives in the wider “Future Funding of VIOW” project. Currently there are no specific funds to replace the Access und, however small levels of funds have been identified and relevant BID’s are being worked up for submission.
    2. **Visitor Information Centre** – a small director working group has met on this subject, the outcomes have also been discussed with the Finance & Remuneration Group and the outcomes will be fully discussed at main board as a specific agenda item.
    3. **Electric Vehicle Charging points** – this project is taking slightly longer than anticipated and will be sub-contracted out of VIOW to be taken forward by an expert island based company / individual.
    4. **Future Funding updates** – this item has been discussed by a director working group with some input from the Finance & Remuneration group, a full discussion will take place at the up-coming board meeting on a specific agenda item.
    5. **Events Portal** – this matter is now progressing after team members being re-tasked on the outcomes, first creative wireframes for this project will be available early November.
    6. **Electric Bikes** – the Red Squirrel Electric bikes are linked with the wider VIC project; however, it is proposed to step out of this area and to sell the complete fleet to either a specific cycle hire operator or to individuals.
16. **Website and Voluntary contribution sales YTD**
    1. The more focused approach to website sales and voluntary contributions has proved fruitful during this financial year and the targets for website sales have been achieved and surpassed. The voluntary contributions have slowed down slightly, the focus on website sales have potentially cannibalised the voluntary contributions but offer a higher yield per transaction.
    2. Going forward the more focused approach is certainly the way to go and for the 2019 / 20 budget the targets will be raised in both areas and should be achieved. The proposed changes in the more agile staffing approach will assist in this process.

**Web Sales YTD & 2019 Q3:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Year** | **Income Generated** |
| 1st September 2018 – 31st August 2019 | £66,082.10 |
| 1st September 2017 – 31st August 2018 | £33,815,74 |

**Web Sales 2019 Q3 only**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Year** | **Income Generated** |
| 15th June 2019 – 31st August 2019 | £1,113.50 |
| 15th June 2018 – 31st August 2018 | £14,265.82 |

**Voluntary Contributions YTD & 2019 Q3:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Year** | **Income Generated** |
| 1st September 2018 – 31st August 2019 | £10,392.47 |
| 1st September 2017 – 31st August 2018 | £14,785.01 |

**Voluntary Contributions 2019 Q3 only:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Year** | **Income Generated** |
| 15th June 2019 – 31st August 2019 | £2,328.13 |
| 15th June 2018 – 31st August 2018 | £4,750.00 |

1. **GDPR and IT**
   1. GDPR is an always anon-going process with external requests to be dealt with along with continuous internal advice given on all projects. A review has taken place after being in place for over 12 months and it has shown that VIOW are compliant in all areas and will continue to follow any changes and their impact on the business.
   2. There are no real IT issues to discuss this quarter.

1. **Travel Press and PR Impact / report**
   1. As in previous reports this element covers 'known' coverage throughout the three-month period, and it should be noted that the values given are based on information currently available. Advertising equivalent value (AEV) and publicity value information for international, some regional publications and on-line coverage is not always available.

National, regional and local media coverage (print and digital): **PR Value**

**June 2019 £683,046.00**

(Reach 4,3620,759)

**July 2019** £**300,570.00**

(Reach 902,672)

**August 2019** £ **82,539.00**

Reach (1326256)

Total value June, July and August 2019 £1,066,155.00

Total value June, July and August 2018 £1,433,631.00

Total value January to August 2019 £3,712,638.00

Total value January to August 2018 £3,600,327.00

* June 2019 coverage value is £683,046.00 compared with £651,579 in 2018.

Note, the figure for June 2019 should have been considerably higher given the press coverage we have received from Russia, China, US, Brazil, Canada and the GCC (Arabian Peninsula: Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates) – following the VE London press visit (Victoria 200) in April this year. However, Visit England do not monitor AVE so don’t have this figure, but the reach of each publication is included further on in this report.

* July 2019 coverage value is £300,570 compared with £250,764, 2018.
* August 2019 coverage value is £82,539 compared with £531,288 in 2018.

This is because in August 2018 we received high value coverage in Yahoo! UK & Ireland (web) and The Telegraph (web), Great British Drives: A laid-back tour of the Isle of Wight in a BMW X3 (a test drive along the Military Road with mentions for various attractions including “We’re going on a Bear Hunt” valued at £83,004 and £91,500.00 respectively. Plus, a feature in Good Housekeeping “Natural Beauties” with a PR value of £208,773.

A full list of the coverage is available if required.

* 1. During the June, July & August 2019 period the following on-line, influencer, magazine and newspaper coverage was achieved:

**June**

04/06/2019 Woman's Weekly - A Victorian Day Out/Victoria's Island Trail

05/06/2019 The I -D-Day anniversary: inside the secret headquarters where plans were made for the liberation of Europe - 99,904 UV/month

June issue Boundless (CMSA) mag 48 hours in the Isle of Wight

June issue LA Globetrotter An Island Paradise in the English Channel: Dinosaur Isle, IW Festival, Osborne, Haven Hall, Thompsons, Garlic Farm, The Needles.

10/06/2019 Travel Begins at 40 (web) - Summer Food Festivals across the South East - Garlic Festival and Sweetcorn Fayre

01/06/2019 Group Leisure & Travel -Top Destinations added to GLT show line-up: Visit Isle of Wight

09/06/2019 National Geographic Traveller -What's new on the Isle Wight: Origin, Sandown

13/06/2019 Trip Reporter (web) - Royal Hotel, Ventnor (review)

15/06/2019 The Times Travel - The 50 best beaches in Britain: Compton, Toms Eco Lodges

20/06/2019 Travel Begins at 40 (web) - Isle of Wight Declared a Biosphere Reserve

21/06/2019 Country Living (web) - The IW has been awarded UNESCO'S Biosphere Reserve Status

24/06/2019 Mail Online - The Isle of Wight is awarded Unesco Biosphere Reserve Status (2,420,000 uv/month)/102,000 followers on social media.

20/06/2019 Independent Online - Isle of Wight awarded Unesco Biosphere Status (uv/month 19,300,000)

21/06/2019 Daily Times Online (Pakistan publication)- Coverage from VB group press trip, April 2019

21/06/2019 Kommersant (Russia) - Coverage from VB group press trip, April 2019 (uv/month 5,000,000)

21/06/2019 Elle (Russia) - Coverage from VB group press trip, April 2019 (uv/month 4,000,000)

21/06/2019 Escape Travel newspaper supplement (Australia) - Coverage from VB group press trip, April 2019 (uv/month 816,000)

21/06/2019 Newsweek (US) Coverage from VB group press trip, April 2019 (uv/month 9,000,000)

21/06/2019 AlSharq Al-Awsat - Coverage from VB group press trip, April 2019 (uv/month 3,600,000)

21/06/2019 AlSharq Al-Awsat - Coverage from VB group press trip, April 2019

21/06/2019 Conde Nast Traveler (China) - Coverage from VB group press trip, April 2019 (piece 1)

21/06/2019 Conde Nast Traveler (China) - Coverage from VB groupress trip, April 2019 (piece 2)

21/06/2019 Top Destinos (Brazil) - Coverage from VB group press trip, April 2019

21/06/2019 The Sunday Sun (Toronto Sun) (Canada) Coverage from VB group press trip, April 2019

24/06/2019 The Telegraph Online - Why the IW has been ranked alongside the Okango: Biosphere with mention for the Slow Guide (uv/month 8,200,000)

17/06/2019 50connect.co.uk - Sailing to the Isle of Wight

26/06/2019 Telerama, France - Queen Victoria etc (insert correct title here)

28/06/2019 Muddy Stilettos (blog) - Glamping the Wight Way

26/06/2019 Oxford Times - Island Escapes round-up

21/06/2019 Countryfile - Seaside Classic: Story of the deckchair with mention for Steephill Cove

05/06/2019 The I - War Secret that's open to visitors

25/06/2019 Olive Magazine (web) - British seaside holidays for foodies:

19/06/2019 Visit England Press Office - July What’s New Bulletin: UNESCO Biosphere Status/Slow Guide

29/06/2019 The DadsNet (web) - The Reason the IW Festival ticks more than one of our family holiday boxes

30/06/2019 The Sunday People - Natural Born Thrillers (round-up): Squirrel Island

**July**

July Coast magazine 10 things to do this month: Rhythmtree festival

07/07/2019 National Geographic Traveller (UK) - Isle of Wight Style on Sea

02/07/2019 Boundless (CMSA) magazine - 48 hours in the Isle of Wight

July BBC Countryfile magazine - Discover the Jewel of the Solent (10 pages)

July London Cyclist Slow Wight - cycling tour of the IW (4 pages)

02/07/2019 Woman's Own Cowes Week included in Woman magazine’s roundup of 15 Free Summer Days Out

02/07/2019 My Weekly - Ultimate Beach Holidays: Royal Beach Break

July Visit England Press Office - July What's New Bulletin: Biosphere Status/Slow Wight Travel Guide

Summer 2019 Expat Time Belgium - Escape to…The Isle of Wight: Destination piece includes Slow Guide

06/07/2019 The I - Days Out section: round-up of Model Villages - Godshill Model Village

08/07/2019 Trip Reporter (web) - Insider guide to the Isle of Wight

12/07/2019 Exploring More (website) - Food festivals across the south-east: Sweetcorn Fayre & Garlic Festival

13/07/2019 The Guardian Travel - Bucketloads of fun: Cowes Week and Ventnor Fringe

Summer issue Holiday Living Summer Special - Make the Most of your Summer - events round up on the IW, including 9 events from July to November

11/07/2019 My Weekly - Summer Fun events: Ventnor Fringe

12/07/2019 Great Yarmouth Mercury - Magical Mummy moments on the Isle of Wight: Island Riding Centre/attractions

12/07/2019 Lowestoft Journal - Magical Mummy moments on the Isle of Wight: Island Riding Centre/attractions

12/07/2019 Romford Recorder - Magical Mummy moments on the Isle of Wight: Island Riding Centre/attractions

12/07/2019 Dereham Times (Fakenham & Wells) - Magical Mummy moments on the Isle of Wight: Island Riding Centre/attractions

11/07/2019 The Comet - Magical Mummy moments on the Isle of Wight: Island Riding Centre/attractions

10/07/2019 Barking & Dagenham Post - Magical Mummy moments on the Isle of Wight: Island Riding Centre/attractions

10/07/2019 TravelSupermarket.com - 10 of the best outdoor activities in the UK this summer: Goodleaf

11/07/2019 East Anglian Daily Times (Essex) Magical Mummy moments on the Isle of Wight: Island Riding Centre/attractions

11/07/2019 Eastern Daily Press - Magical Mummy moments on the Isle of Wight: Island Riding Centre/attractions

22/07/2019 Bolton News - Island Escapes: Isle of Wight

22/07/2019 Lancashire Telegraph - Island Escapes: Isle of Wight

23/07/2019 MSN UK (web) - The best beaches in the UK: Compton Bay

25/07/2019 50 connect (web) - Osborne House

16/07/2019 Hampshire Life (web) - The story behind Ventnor Fringe ahead of its 10th anniversary

30/07/2019 Travel Begins at 40 (web) - Cowes Week

24/07/2019 Visit England Press Office - August What’s New Bulletin: new e-cycling package, Seaview Hotel

15/07/2019 Eastern Daily Press (web) - Feel like a Rubbish Mum? So, did I until I did this!

**August**

August Hampshire Life - 24 hours in Cowes, including Slow Travel Guide

August Prima Magazine - Escapes in the UK: Sandown beach (Origin)

01/08/2019 London Planner Britain Planner: Island in the Sun

01/08/2019 Suffolk Resident - Mummy Moments: Slow Wight Travel Guide/IW Walking Festival

August Discover Touring (online magazine) - Fit for a Queen/Victoria's Island Trail - 5 pages including the front page

05/08/2019 Travel Begins at 40 (web) - Isle of Wight Garlic Festival

15/08/2019 Waitrose Weekend mag Events round-up: Garlic Festival

August A Life Well Travelled (blog) - Ventnor Fringe: A Visitor's Guide

August A Life Well Travelled (blog) - The Royal Hotel

August A Life Well Travelled (blog) - Isle of Wight: A travel guide

10/08/2019 Isle of Wight/You Tube - Isle of Wight Travel Guide

10/08/2019 Travelsupermarket.com - 10 of the best outdoor activities this summer: Tree Climbing

18/08/2019 Travel Mail on Sunday (India) - Footloose in Dino Country (double-page spread)

16-Aug Silver Travel Advisor (web) - Cruising to the Isle of Wight

16-Aug Boundless (web) - 48 hours on the Isle of Wight: make the most of a weekend escape

21-Aug Cycling Europe (web) - Cycling the Isle of Wight

23/08/2019 Guardian Travel Good Nature: citizen science trips in the UK: Under the Pier

23/08/2019 Guardian Travel (web) Good Nature: citizen science trips in the UK: Under the Pier

* 1. In addition to the specific press work undertaken and facilitated, the press team have also taken part in other media facilitation activities and have welcomed the following journalists and influencers:

**Media and influencer visits:**



1. **IOW / Industry press and communications impact / report**
   1. Local / industry press communications especially linking with BID levy payers across the island is a priority for the organisation and has been given its own focus, as this is an important route to market locally and with our BID levy payers.
   2. The YTD (1st Jan till 31st August 2019) local AVE is valued at – **£105,938**

The specific (1st June till 31st August 2019) local AVE equates to - **£37,948**

To enable Media outlets to consume our messages more easily internal creation of content has been adopted by VIOW, which seems to be reaping the benefits as more audio is being featured when delivered to the outlets, this also includes images. In addition to this, the approach also allows a certain degree of control of message.

The YTD number of Industry e-mails sent out from 1st January till 31st August 2019 - **96**

Number of Industry e-mails sent out to the industry for the period 1st June till 31st August 2019 – **12**

The overall sent rate for the industry newsletter is now **934**, this number is slightly down on the previous number shared, this relates to multiple site organisations and certain business closing.

Delivered rate – **99%**

Open up rate – **32%**

Click through rate – **5.8%**

1. **Access fund projects**

The Access Fund programme is now in its final year of a three-year funding agreement between the Department for Transport and the Isle of Wight Council. The programme is set to continue until 31st March 2020. One major part of this final year of the projects are a legacy plan across all areas. This is currently being formulated with 1st draft to be available early in November 2019.

For the year 2019/20 (April 2019 – March 2020), new Project Initiation Documents have been agreed and projects have been assigned new codes as follows:

Tourism business engagement programme: **1A**

Destination walking and cycling: **1B**

Bicycle Island (delivered externally and supported by Visit Isle of Wight): **1C**

Travel Ambassador volunteers: **1D**

* 1. **1A Tourism Business engagement**

The Green Star scheme is gaining momentum and now has 83 members. Many of the members have implemented new initiatives and made changes to their websites in order to progress up the bronze to gold programme structure. Of the 83 members, 43 are gold, 28 are silver and 10 are bronze. Two members are Green Star Ambassadors (property managers/agents), who have pledged to promote the scheme directly to their property owners.

The Southern Vectis key card project comes under the Green Star scheme and as at 10th August 2019, the project had converted 2,867 days of travel from individual car journeys to bus journeys since the project began in June 2017.

In partnership with Red Funnel, a successful familiarisation trip was delivered in June. Red Funnel presented their eco-friendly activities to nearly 30 attendees and provided exclusive use of the Signature Lounge as well as trips to the Captain’s bridge. At the time of writing, we have ten Green Star members booked onto Wightlink’s Green Agenda presentation to be held on Thursday, 5 September. These two events are particularly significant because the Green Star programme has never been able to secure bookings with the two ferry operators before. Discussion are taking place with Hovertravel to arrange a similar visit there

* 1. **1B Destination Walking and Cycling**

This project is made up of marketing campaigns that promote the Isle of Wight as a key walking and cycling destination.

The new Walking and Cycling leaflet is taking shape and we are in the final stages of graphic design. We have also added three walks to the Go Jauntly app and have more planned. A new ‘Walk There Bus Back’ campaign has begun with a series of posters at the Wightlink terminal which promote the Ryde Esplanade to Quarr Abbey route, discussions are being held with Red Funnel to run a similar campaign for Cowes to Osborne House.

A digital campaign to promote walking on the Visit Isle of Wight with run of network ads will go live from 16th September for four weeks. The adverts will link directly to the newly revamped walking pages on the VIOW website.

Tim Wiggins (author of Life in the Saddle) has produced draft multi-day cycling itineraries to be progressed into a designed format, and he has also published two blog posts on his blog. In addition, Andrew Sykes from CyclingEurope.org has visited the Isle of Wight and will publish blog posts later in September.

* 1. **1C Bicycle Island**

This project is being delivered by an external consultant and is supported by Visit Isle of Wight. The project seeks to research the likelihood of holiday cyclists continuing to cycle when they get home and is therefore a long-term behaviour change research project. Two cycle hire operators (Wight Cycle Hire and Route Fifty7) are asking customers to complete a short survey about their intentions to cycle more at home; and Visit Isle of Wight is helping by collecting and sending the data.

As at 11th August 2019, 357 respondents had completed the survey which is a strong sample for partway through the project.

* 1. **Travel Ambassador Volunteers**

There are 65 volunteer applicants on the VIOW database and there are approximately ten regular volunteers. On Saturday, 24th August (Bank Holiday weekend), five volunteers took part in a mini takeover of the Visitor Information Centre to promote car-free ideas to weekend visitors.

On 3rd September, training for volunteers was offered to become tour guides for walking routes around Newport in conjunction with the IOW Council’s regeneration team. Five people signed up and took part in the training.

One volunteer is now assisting in the Visitor Information Centre on a weekly basis with another volunteer about to do the same. As at the end of August the accumulated hours of volunteering were 103.5 hours. Research to investigate why people do/don’t volunteer has been carried out and the results will shape the future plan.

1. **Website statistics and development**
   1. The Visit Isle of Wight website will be and is the main “Call to Action” (CTA) for all campaigns, be they Brand or Tactical.

There is a research project currently underway focusing on the UX (User Experience) of the VIOW website, this will shape the way forward for the website and its development. The agency is due to report back to VIOW on 7th October 2019.

Website content continues to be refined and duplication of information is continually removed. The aim is to boost the usability of the site within the confines of the ECMS to make the information that users want easier to find.

In the last three months pages have been updated or amended, including: Things to do in Autumn, Summer and October Half Term, as well as creating pages for the Biosphere Reserve status, the Green Star Scheme, initial updates to the Ryde town page, and a major revamp of the Walking section.

The Cowes town page has been redesigned, with brand new written content which has been integrated back into visitisleofwight.co.uk. The style and format of the Cowes pages will be the basis for all towns and villages pages moving forward.

Updates to the homepage content and carousel have been made to reflect campaign messages.

The Cycling pages are currently being redesigned following work on the newly redesigned Walking pages, with new written content and images to better help users find great walks around the Island.

More regular blogs allow VIOW to widen the general Isle of Wight content visitisleofwight.co.uk shares this includes VIOW blogs, and content from industry providers and Wight BID levy payers. A monthly What’s On blog is posted (created from our VIOW events listings) and also some ‘evergreen’ web content around key holiday ‘events’ like Summer, October Half Term, Halloween & Christmas etc.

The VIOW digital team commented on the website as follows:

“***Visits, sessions and users continue to be up on last year, however the average session time is still lower than all previous years. This could be related to mobile overtaking desktop as the top device used to view the website. The website has not been built ‘mobile first’ which means it isn’t the easiest to navigate on mobile. July saw an average bounce rate of 66% and an average session time of 1 min 43 seconds on mobile, which is an improvement over May but still higher than it should be. We are continuing to work on improving content and searchability of the website for mobile***.”

Monthly SEO meeting to improve metadata, searchability with Simpleview.

A full report on all web statistics is available in the dropbox for information, perusal and comment.

1. **Brand Marketing activities and impact**

**Post-Easter**

The post-Easter campaign ran 20th May to 30th June. It was made up of 50 National Rail (South Western Railway) 6-Sheet Posters, 272 National Rail 6-Sheet Digital Screens (3 South Western Railway Stations & 15 Southern Railway Stations), 6 Waterloo Underground Booking Hall 6-Sheet Posters, 154 South Western Railway smaller posters, 28 Waterloo Underground Escalator Panels and 22 Motorway Services 6-Sheet Posters - combined this media mix provided the campaign with 15,000,000 opportunities-to-see.

The campaign also included 9,667,661 ‘run-of-network’ digital display advertising impressions and 61,512 email newsletters.

Compared to the 2018 post-Easter Campaign, overall website visits were up 11%, organic website visits were up 4%, the run-of-network digital ads provided 14,433 clicks throughs, e-newsletters provided 5,358 clicks.

During this campaign 6 partners invested in 8,101,987 co-branded ‘run-of-network’ digital display advertising impressions, providing 9,353 click throughs to their individual websites.

Paid for, targeted Facebook advertising had a reach of over 164,102 on Facebook, Instagram and Facebook Messenger advertising 341,741 impressions.

**Summer**

We have used digital marketing to promote summer visits to the Isle of Wight including boosted Facebook posts, e-newsletters and digital Run of Network advertising.

Over July and August four different creative ad campaigns were served using digital Run of Network ads focusing on - Slow Guide, Holidays, Breaks and Summer.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Campaign** | **Impressions** | **Click throughs** | **Average CPC** |
| **Overall** | 15,449,480 | 8,305 | 19p |
| Slow Guide | 1,106,393 | 860 | 13p |
| Holidays | 2,554,022 | 1,509 | 16p |
| Breaks | 2,540,972 | 1,463 | 17p |
| Summer | 9,248,093 | 4,473 | 21p |

1. **Campaign Marketing activities**

**E-Newsletter**

The mailing list now stands at 22,249 subscribers. A strategy of competitions and social media campaigns has been used to grow the list.

Current Open Rate is 33.3% benchmarked against the industry average of 14.5%. Click through rate is currently 7.4% benchmarked against the industry average of 1.6%.

Newsletters are sent every two weeks, complimented by specific ‘Solus’ slots bought by industry.

As the list has grown the open rates and click through rates have started to fall slightly.

**Recent and ongoing projects**

**2020 Isle of Wight Walking Festival – 2nd to 17th May**

The 2020 Isle of Wight Walking Festival is currently being planned. Warner Leisure have withdrawn sponsorship funding for 2020 and a new sponsor is being sought.

The campaign for the Isle of Wight Walking Festival has been nominated for the Marketing and PR category for the

Isle of Wight Chamber of Commerce Awards for Excellence 2019. The awards ceremony is 18th October.

There is clear feedback from walkers that they miss the detailed printed brochure that was produced when IWC ran the Walking Festival. A printable pdf was produced for 2019, but this is not enough for many of the target audience.

**Slow Travel Guide to the Isle of Wight**

The site is being promoted using posters at Wightlink terminals, digital run of network ads, organic and paid social media posts and PR. Visitisleofwight.co.uk is a key part of the Slow Guide promotion with the 98% of referral traffic coming from the site.

A double-sided DL leaflet is currently being distributed around the Island and at ferry terminals.

There has been substantial press coverage for the guide including articles/mentions in walk (the official Ramblers magazine), BBC Countryfile Magazine and The Telegraph.

Mark Rowe (the author of the guide) is currently writing additional blog content for use on visitisleofwight.co.uk and slowwighttravelguide.co.uk.

The guide features in the autumn campaign plans.

New (winter) walking images commissioned as part of the funding for the Slow Wight Travel Guide have been uploaded to the Flickr site.

**Leaflets**

English Heritage are financially and editorially supporting the updating and republishing of the Victoria’s Island Trail leaflet to include copy about the Victoria 200 anniversary in 2019. This has been printed and is now being distributed.

The Churchill Trail is being updated by Jamie McCauley and has been printed and is in distribution.

The Destination Cowes leaflet has been updated to reflect the change in promotion for the town. It is now ‘Welcome to Cowes’. This is at the printers and will be distributed soon for the remainder of 2019 and 2020, as the design has longevity.

1. **Social Media**

Community engagement is the number one priority on our social platforms.

Using organic posts, targeted paid posts to back up campaign messages and other posts where necessary (promoting an event or a popular post) opportunities for engagement are created.

Social media demonstrates that VIOW is the authority for Isle of Wight visitor information, at the same time highlighting what’s available for visitors on the Island and supporting the marketing activities of the tourism industry.

In Q3 our social media manager Rachel was unavailable for periods of time for personal reasons. This is the dilemma that using free-lance contractors brings to the organisation. This meant that whilst posting was consistent with posting, engagement was slightly down and the figures reflect this.

**Instagram 2019**

Total followers are now 13.5K. Follower numbers have grown by 25% since January 2019.

Total impressions for the period Jan – Aug 2019 are 2,001,256. This is up 48% on Jan – Aug 2018.

Total reach for the period Jan – Aug 2019 is 821,691. This is up 41% on Jan – Aug 2018.

**Influencers:**

VIOW works with Influencers for takeovers where appropriate ones can be found and had particular success with local influencer [@isleofwight\_triplets](https://www.instagram.com/isleofwight_triplets/) who took over the VIOW Instagram 5th – 7th July 2019. With triplets aged under 3, Tori was an excellent ambassador for our post Easter campaign – highlighting places to go with pre-school children.

**The results were:**

**Followers:** Up 293 over 3 days(45 for the previous 3 day period).

**Grid Posts:** Likes received up by 117% compared to previous 2 day period

Comments received up by 500% compared to previous 2 day period

Reach up by 93% compared to previous 2 day period

**Stories**: Completion rate: 97% (people sticking around to watch!) Up 4% compared to previous 2 day period

Total replies received: 82 – up 1950% compared to previous 2 day period

Impressions: 136k – Up 4348% compared to previous 2 day period

**Currently the team are:**

Focussing on UGC; sharing other people’s posts of photos that use the #PureIslandHappiness hashtag and which will appeal to our audience.

Posting a story once a week on Instagram using UGC.

Using the swipe up feature which allows to direct traffic to website content.

A takeover with [@grahamcustance](https://www.instagram.com/grahamcustance/) (September) is scheduled. [@whatstacydid](https://www.instagram.com/whatstacydid/) (November) influencer visit is planned. These will focus on winter short breaks and the Slow Wight Travel Guide.

Monthly ‘Stories’ that reflect the ‘What’s On’ blog are also posted.

**Instagram 2019**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Followers** | **Reach** | **Impressions** | **Likes** | **Comments** | **Engagement Rate** |
| January | 10105 | 94600 | 185784 | 13470 | 372 | 14.6% |
| February | 10383 | 83856 | 150173 | 10753 | 329 | 13.2% |
| March | 10796 | 86789 | 156637 | 11916 | 327 | 14.1% |
| April | 11426 | 92944 | 369122 | 11598 | 437 | 12.9% |
| May | 11993 | 99886 | 199140 | 11405 | 348 | 11.8% |
| June | 12389 | 102796 | 185047 | 13337 | 299 | 13.3% |
| July | 12976 | 110005 | 439187 | 9874 | 329 | 9.3% |
| August | 13518 | 150815 | 316166 | 8732 | 148 | 5.9% |

**Instagram 2018**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Followers** | **Reach** | **Impressions** | **Likes** | **Comments** | **Engagement Rate** |
| January | 5200 | 53224 | 109704 | 8750 | 191 | 17% |
| February | 5400 | 49069 | 98410 | 8958 | 199 | 19% |
| March | 5616 | 56317 | 125694 | 10882 | 311 | 20% |
| April | 5879 | 48157 | 86887 | 8342 | 207 | 18% |
| May | 6108 | 60718 | 104795 | 9200 | 193 | 15% |
| June | 6394 | 63366 | 119018 | 9650 | 274 | 16% |
| July | 6697 | 71114 | 181772 | 10886 | 225 | 16% |
| August | 7656 | 81418 | 196871 | 12130 | 436 | 15% |
| September | 8286 | 82771 | 153490 | 11897 | 439 | 15% |
| October | 8811 | 79473 | 202685 | 11315 | 317 | 14.60% |
| November | 9239 | 107689 | 191676 | 13056 | 289 | 12.40% |
| December | 9594 | 112957 | 174265 | 10027 | 245 | 9.10% |

**Twitter 2019**

Total followers are now 15,160. Follower numbers have grown by 8% over the year.

Total impressions for the period Jan – Aug 2019 are 2283501. This is down 21% on Jan – Aug 2018

Total engagements for the period Jan – Aug 2019 are 41157. This is down 23.4% on Jan – Aug 2018.

We proactively engage Twitter users in conversations about the Isle of Wight, share IW content, support individual Wight BID levy payers and push out our campaigns.

Our most popular tweets in this quarter were about the Unesco Biosphere, Isle of Wight Pride and the Isle of Wight Scooter Rally.

**Twitter 2019**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Followers** | **Impressions** | **Engagements** | **Engagement Rate** |
| January | 14,309 | 308301 | 5711 | 1.9% |
| February | 14400 | 259366 | 5538 | 2.1% |
| March | 14562 | 290779 | 5541 | 1.9% |
| April | 14648 | 333464 | 5670 | 1.7% |
| May | 14752 | 318431 | 5504 | 1.7% |
| June | 14868 | 249251 | 4338 | 1.7% |
| July | 14961 | 263543 | 4202 | 1.6% |
| August | 15160 | 260366 | 4653 | 1.8% |

**Twitter 2018**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Followers** | **Impressions** | **Engagements** | **Engagement Rate** | **Paid Impressions** |
| January | 12873 | 382136 | 7542 | 2.00% | 180384 |
| February | 13008 | 298965 | 6801 | 1.70% |
| March | 13231 | 398812 | 8328 | 2.10% |
| April | 13414 | 331453 | 5218 | 2% |
| May | 13559 | 356651 | 5278 | 1% |
| June | 13670 | 305449 | 5340 | 1.70% |
| July | 13868 | 345700 | 6110 | 1.80% |
| August | 13924 | 356520 | 6187 | 1.70% |
| September | 14005 | 312121 | 5608 | 1.80% |
| October | 14104 | 311786 | 4710 | 1.50% |
| November | 14159 | 309365 | 4492 | 1.50% |
| December | 14218 | 246734 | 4448 | 1.80% |

**Facebook 2019**

Total likes are at 42,010k. Followers numbers have increased by 17% over the year.

Total reach (the number of people who have seen our posts) for Jan – Aug is 3,901,628. This is 15.19% up on the previous year.

Total engagements (the number of people who have interacted with our posts) for Jan – Aug is 740,436. This is up 54.4%.

Asking questions works really well with the Facebook algorithm and we have found that when we about favourite attractions, things to do and accommodation we reach higher number of people.

The following types of posts continue to be top 10 performers:

* Weekly Top Fan Photo Album - UGC
* Voting posts
* Competition posts (to website!)
* Posts asking a question to followers about people’s own experiences

NB – in June 2019 we had our highest-ranking post ever on Facebook – about the Biosphere award. It had organic reach of 147,219 and engagement of 18,047. The next most popular post that month was about Steephill Cove and it had reach of 23,812 and engagement of 2,127.

**Facebook 2019**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Total Likes** | **Total Engagements** | **Total Reach** | **Total Organic Reach** | **Total Paid Reach** |
| **January** | 37963 | 24248 | 1105922 | 178348 | 928080 |
| **February** | 38150 | 23312 | 195997 | 170841 | 27084 |
| **March** | 38594 | 37773 | 477748 | 252069 | 231506 |
| **April** | 39110 | 41325 | 309220 | 223284 | 90347 |
| **May** | 39644 | 53363 | 569691 | 210991 | 375071 |
| **June** | 40610 | 476911 | 480365 | 406022 | 74343 |
| **July** | 41183 | 34142 | 322923 | 265823 | 61118 |
| **August** | 42010 | 49362 | 439762 | 340515 | 103041 |

**Facebook 2018**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Total Likes** | **Total Engagements** | **Total Reach** | **Total Organic Reach** | **Total Paid Reach** |
| **January** | 34721 | 38872 | 565592 | 259977 | 309909 |
| **February** | 34879 | 40298 | 273083 | 262570 | 1141 |
| **March** | 35960 | 79507 | 682215 | 423614 | 270008 |
| **April** | 36090 | 24416 | 254555 | 169543 | 17825 |
| **May** | 36234 | 28083 | 449055 | 156313 | 309653 |
| **June** | 36450 | 34378 | 219248 | 164494 | 7537 |
| **July** | 36800 | 53116 | 299346 | 249783 | 39871 |
| **August** | 34721 | 38872 | 565592 | 259977 | 309909 |
| **September** | 37288 | 24221 | 135079 | 134618 | 0 |
| **October** | 37489 | 25343 | 178462 | 153409 | 26923 |
| **November** | 37594 | 21503 | 176634 | 138895 | 39344 |
| **December** | 37713 | 17583 | 410039 | 137264 | 275870 |

1. **Travel Trade & Exhibitions**

This section of the report is a new feature and relates to the Travel Trade activity and the Exhibitions partnership and the work carried out on it’s behalf by Visit Isle of Wight. This it the 1st report to the board on this since the employment of the Travel Trade and Exhibitions manager.

**England’s Coast**

Visit Isle of Wight is a partner in the VisitEngland funded campaign. We have contributed to the project’s website, adding content for itineraries, ambassador training, and encouraged our BID levy payers to take advantage of free business listings. An interactive video for the Island has been produced together for one for the South East coast – both are due to go live soon.[**www.englandscoast.com**](http://www.englandscoast.com)

**UK Inbound**

Since April Visit Isle of Wight has been an active member of UK Inbound. We have attended two networking meetings and in July the associations’ membership officer visited the Island, and we hosted a visit via Hovertravel to Ryde and Osborne. We are discussing the possibility of a trade fam visit during 2020.

**Isle of Wight Exhibition Partnership**

***BBC Gardeners’ World Live, NEC***

The Isle of Wight was highlighted at the BBC Good Food Show Summer and BBC Gardeners’ World Live which returned to the NEC in Birmingham from Thursday 13 – Sunday 16 June. The Island’s stand showcased the Isle of Wight’s attractions including the coastal gardens which benefit from one of the mildest climates in Britain.

Information on how to get to the island by ferry, and bus, cycling and walking routes was available on the stand in the gardening area of the BBC show.

Large consumer shows such as the BBC Gardeners’ World Live are aimed at a discerning audience who have a good income, value their leisure time and are prepared to spend time searching out the latest trends, tips and experiences. They like good food and spending time in beautiful gardens – two aspects that the island has in abundance.

The show is just one of a number where the Island is promoted by the Isle of Wight Exhibition Partnership, a group of leading attractions, ferry operators and Visit Isle of Wight.

***New Forest Show***

Located at New Park in the heart of the New Forest National Park, the Show is a long established three-day agricultural event. The Show attracts around 91,000 visitors across its duration. The Isle of Wight stand at the New Forest Show was in a new location this year. Although the show had a very wet and windy start the last two days were extremely busy and new elements such as our branded giant deckchair gave an opportunity for social media interaction. A ‘discount map’ was produced with special offers from each of the Exhibition Partnership’s partners.

***BBC Countryfile Live***

Between the 2nd - 5th August 2018, BBC Countryfile, Britain’s most watched factual television show was brought to life in a live countryside event. Hosted within the grounds of Blenheim Palace in Oxfordshire, BBC Countryfile Live, this large show in the grounds of attracted over 100,000 visitors. The Isle of Wight stand made the most of its location with a double fronted stand. Footfall to the stand was below expectations this year due to the stand being a quieter area of the show, but that allowed greater interaction with the many families visiting the stand and taking part in our activities. The Island’s Sandown Bay and Bembridge came top in the BBC Countryfile Awards this year, and this was highlighted on the BBC Countryfile Magazine stand.

**Groups and Travel Trade Webpages and Guide**

Work is progressing in increasing the content for groups and the travel trade on our website. Group accommodation now has a dedicated page, and further content will populate the website and a pdf Groups & Travel Trade Guide which will be available this autumn.

**Travel Trade Database**

A database of tour operators, coach operators, and group contacts is being developed with the aim of distributing dedicated e-newsletters during the coming year.

**Anderson Travel**

A familiarisation visit by two staff members of Anderson Travel was organised travelling to the Island on one of the companies trips with Red Funnel and visiting initially Osborne, the Needles, Shanklin, Godshill, and then extended to visit the Isle of Wight Steam Railway – with an overnight stay at the Royal Esplanade Hotel and a return journey on Hovertravel.

**Tourism South East Near Europe Campaign**

Visit Isle of Wight is participating in Tourism South East Near Europe Campaign. The campaign targets our closet European countries, including Germany, France and Belgium. TSE will highlight the regions continued commitment in welcoming European visitors. The activity offers campaign partners an opportunity to put products in front of the key trade decision makers and press, Tour Operators, Wholesalers, and OTA’s. The campaign runs from now until April 2020. With a Belgium Trade Mission in September, France in October, and Germany in March 2020. Working with Visit Britain, UK inbound & Visit England throughout campaign, there will be representation at Explore GB and UK Inbound in 2020, and it will complement our own activity with UK Inbound and the England’s Coast project. Red Funnel and the Isle of Wight Steam Railway have partnered with Visit Isle of Wight on this campaign.

**Group Leisure & Travel Awards & Group Leisure & Travel Show**

The Isle of Wight is a finalist in the Group Leisure & Travel Awards. The annual awards celebrate first class destinations, attractions and providers across group travel, and having the Island ranked alongside cities such as Belfast, Birmingham, Liverpool and London and a much larger destination such as Devon is an accolade reflecting how much the Isle of Wight has to offer groups.

Wightlink is also a finalist in Best Ferry category listed alongside operators on the cross-channel and international routes, and hotel operators with hotels on the Island, Warner Leisure and Daish’s, are finalist in other categories.

Visit Isle of Wight is exhibiting at the Group Leisure & Travel Show in October, and a feature on the Island is planned in the Group Leisure & Travel Show magazine this winter.

**Taking England to the World**

Taking England to the World is a one-day training programme being rolled out nationally, in conjunction with Google Digital Garage, which aims to help your business become international-ready. Developed as part of the Government’s £40 million Discover England Fund, this course is designed to equip you with the skills to develop and promote your product for sale in international markets. The nearest courses to the Isle of Wight are being held in the New Forest and Portsmouth.

**TXGB**

VisitEngland have launch, TXGB or Tourism Exchange Great Britain - a business-to-business platform connecting tourism Suppliers to distributors around the world. Many operators who engage with OTAs will have the option of linking this with TXGB. We are discussing with VisitEngland how we integrate our website with TXGB.

1. **BID activities, funding for 2019 / 2020**

Year 4 of the BID started 1st September2019. So far I have cross referenced the draft lists of BID levy payers provided by IOWC and sent letters to most of the New Businesses (95) and New Liable Parties for existing businesses (29), however, since sending the letters the list has been updated again by IWOC with a further 13 new businesses. This could change again with the final / actual billing list.

There are 1314 business on the Year 4 draft list. 19 businesses on this list will be supressed and not sent a bill due to known ongoing reasons such as, does not benefit from tourism, redevelopment, etc.

Approx. 15 businesses will probably be written off due to contact address issues, known reasons to appeal etc but we will send a bill as they are within the Wight BID scope with no ongoing reason not to invoice.

The Final list will be pulled from NNDR by IOWC 1st / 2nd Week September

Programme for Year 3

Bills will be issued 18th September 2019

Instalment due 20th October 2019

Reminders issued 18th November 2019

Summons 20th January 2020

Court Hearing Date 10th February 2020

1. **Visitor Information Centre**

The Visitor Information Centre was discussed fully at the previous board meeting on 28th June 2019 where the discussion regarding financial viability of the Newport VIOW staffed location and the ultimate provision of tourism information across the island for visitors was deferred for a director working group to look into the subject more fully. This director working group has met and have discussed fully this subject.

The visitor numbers that visit the site, the overall costs for the provision of the VIC and the considerations of the consumption of visitor information from a digital perspective linking into the island wide TIP network were all considered.

1. **Finance and governance**

The key focus of process, financial processes and stability continue to be the operational management team mantra This has been the focus going forward and will continue to be so.

The Financial Controller continues to bring financial stability to the process and has brought clarity to the finance process and reporting.

A separate finance report has been created along with the relevant Management Accounts, Profit & Loss accounts, long term cash-flow and Balance sheet.

The Bankline processes have been brought into play.

Discussions will commence shortly with our bank provision to put in place a modest overdraft facility to have as a “back-up” during the leaner winter period as agreed with the Finance and Remuneration Group. This will not be used unless in emergency and operational management will continue to control costs during that period and at all other times.

Prior to this board meeting and the issue of the relevant board papers, a meeting of the Finance & Remuneration group has been held, chaired by Rob Holgate and with John Allen, Tom Honeyman-Brown, Will Myles & Lesley Yates, the findings and way forward from this meeting will be discussed at the Board meeting

All relevant financial documentation can be found in the Visit Isle of Wight dropbox.

Smith & Williamson accountants have again been engaged by Visit Isle of Wight Ltd to produce the audited accounts for Visit Isle of Wight Ltd for the period 1st September 2018 till 31st August 2019. The Audit process with an engagement meeting has already taken place with the “on the ground” activity taking place during October, with a view to having the audited accounts available for board directors to sign off early in 2020, well ahead of the required posting deadline t Companies House.

With the changes / resignations of 2 directors at the previous board meeting the required election process has taken place with 9 candidates in the process. 2 of the candidates have polled the most votes by a long way and will be revealed to the board meeting on the 19th September for ratification.

The future funding of Visit Isle of Wight is a major project to enable the correct funding model to be put in place going forward. This will be discussed fully as an agenda item at the up and coming board meeting.

A topline budget has been created and circulated to the Finance and Remuneration group for consideration and sign-off. This has several staffing elements to it, which a very recent and as such have not been fully costed at this stage.