

Marches Investment Fund – Herefordshire Visitor Economy Project Update October 2020

Background

The Marches LEP approved a business case submitted by Herefordshire Council in partnership with the Herefordshire Business Board on the 27th May 2020. The business case proposed that the £444,220 allocated to Herefordshire to support Covid 19 recovery would be focussed on the visitor economy. The visitor economy has been one of the sectors most impacted by the pandemic due to the government instruction to close for a number of months. The project will support the soonest possible recovery of the visitor economy through a marketing and PR campaign, promoting the county as a great place for day and overnight staycation visits in the summer and autumn 2020.

Update on Activities September to October 2020

Following the last update report the following has been implemented:

- **Engaging businesses and partners** – continues including the setting up of a database of businesses and a Facebook page dedicated to the new campaigns see detail under delivery
- **Steering Group** – the project steering group continues to meet on a monthly basis. In addition two workshops have been held to finalise the marketing plan and to help develop the briefs for media spend, website update and research. The tender briefs will published in accordance with the Herefordshire Council procurement process.
- **Delivery partner - Orphans Press – Marketing.**
Continues to work with partners and the sector in Herefordshire to deliver campaigns, develop new ideas and build momentum across the county. New since September includes:
 - Project Management
 - Marketing Plan – has been finalised and shared with the steering group.
 - Developing recommendations for the new visitor website, and media spend
 - Launch of Apples for Autumn campaign and developing new campaigns for Christmas, Winter, etc.
- **Delivery partner - Travel Tonic - PR lead.**
Continues to work strongly with Orphans Press, sector and partners and are continue to:
 - Managing the Visit Herefordshire social media accounts
 - Press releases and familiarisation visitsNew since September update includes:
 - Communications Plan finalized
 - Familiarisation visits, press and PR, examples being:
 - 11th October, [Sunday Times](#)
 - 13th October, [Guardian Travel](#)
 - 17th October, Daily Star, Daily Telegraph, The Sun
 - 18th October, Sunday Mirror
 - 20th October, [Independent](#)
 - Conde Nast – included Herefordshire in their [The 10 Best Places to Visit in the UK in 2021](#)
 - Birdwatching Magazine for publication Feb/Mar 2021
 - Instagram / Blogger /Influencers

- [Monologue](#)
- [thesefourwalls](#)

- **Overall in response to new coronavirus lockdown rules:**

- Immediate rejig of the social media strategy following the lockdown announcement
- On campaign plans, minor tweaks but no media/ influencers due for November but some for early December so will continue to support those visits
- Content campaign and press releases rewording around planning ahead
- Supporting businesses with a delivery / takeaway offering and getting the message out to the more local audience. Not usually not a key target but is something we can do and show the entrepreneurship of the county and how businesses are adapting
- Remain positive about the Winter potential for day and stay visitors beyond the lockdown with plenty of inspiration for future Winter trips and activities which can inspire forward planning
- Get started on incredible holiday ideas for 2021 to start planning for now
- Start talking about how you can plan for Christmas with activities and shopping trips pre-Christmas if we are out of the lockdown – mail order Christmas presents and experiences with a Herefordshire Christmas Gift Guide