

*"WORLD CLASS WORCESTERSHIRE CELEBRATES WORCESTERSHIRE AND SHARES THE COUNTY'S SUCCESSES. IT RAISES THE PROFILE OF THE COUNTY THAT WE LOVE."*

**Background:**

World Class Worcestershire is supported by Worcestershire County Council, the six district councils, Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership, Visit Worcestershire, businesses, the Cricket Club, Worcester Warriors and people who live in and love the county.

The ambition is to raise the profile of Worcestershire locally, nationally and internationally and to:

- Support strategies to attract inward investment and to be a part of the journey for potential investors in Worcestershire
- Promote Worcestershire to potential visitors
- Showcase the county's success stories
- To become a rallying call for those who live, work and share a passion for the county

When it comes to profile Worcestershire has been described as a best kept secret. But when asked, eight out of ten people who live in the county say that they want Worcestershire to have a more positive brand. They support World Class Worcestershire and its ambitions.

**Supporting messages:**

Worcestershire has much to be proud of: it has one of the fastest growing economies in the country; according to latest figures the county's productivity grew by 2.8% which is the second fastest rate of all of the 39 Local Enterprise Partnership areas; the county has a motivated, highly skilled and healthy workforce who benefit from fantastic schools and colleges; each year two million overnight stays in the county help tourism to contribute more than £500 million to the local economy.

Worcestershire is located in the heart of England. Two capital cities are within easy reach and Birmingham and Bristol are just an hour's drive away. Three motorways run through the county and in less than an hour you can be at one of the three international airports which are nearby.

The University of Worcester is amongst the fastest growing higher education institutions in the UK. Nearly 200,000 students attend the ten universities that are within an hour's drive of the county.

Worcestershire is home to the National Cyber Skills Centre and is globally renowned for its expertise in tackling cyber-crime. The specialist communications agency QinetiQ is based at the Malvern Hills Science Park in the south of the county which is the site of a growing number of spin-out companies.

Worcestershire benefits from a strong automotive supply chain, linking with Jaguar Land Rover and other first tier car manufacturers. The county has a strong manufacturing base in traditional industries such as carpet weaving, needles and textile manufacture. Machine

manufacturing and engineering employment in Worcestershire is 85% above the England average.

Agri-Tech in the Vale of Evesham leads the way with its innovative approaches to food production.

Worcestershire is rightly proud of its rich heritage. King John is buried in Worcester Cathedral. The county was home to the world famous composer, Sir Edward Elgar and both the first and the last battles of the English Civil War were fought in Worcestershire.

### **Progress to date:**

World Class Worcestershire has gained recognition from senior government ministers. Greg Clark MP, the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government and the Bromsgrove MP Sajid Javid, the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills both showed their support at MIPIM UK which is the UK's largest exhibition and conference for property professionals. World Class Worcestershire had a prominent presence at last year's event.

In its first full year, the World Class Worcestershire brand has featured in the local and regional media, in the press, on radio and on television. Through the sponsorship of Worcestershire County Cricket Club and Worcester Warriors, along with high profile events such as the European Wheelchair Basketball Championships and professional cycling events, the brand has reached people across the UK. Mentions of World Class Worcestershire across social media outlets have grown steadily since its launch.

World Class Worcestershire has helped the county to showcase achievements. It is a brand that has the ability to increase engagement levels with residents, to bring people together and to facilitate opportunities for business networking inside and outside of the county.

Sitting alongside the Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership, Visit Worcestershire and Worcestershire County Council, World Class Worcestershire is an umbrella brand which enables councils and partner organisations to come together with a single, Worcestershire banner. World Class Worcestershire supports the ambitions of Worcestershire Next Generation.

World Class Worcestershire is also an established part of the narrative of Worcestershire County Council, supported by the Leader of the Council and his Cabinet.

### **Achievements:**

- More than 1000 business networking opportunities delivered to date under the World Class Worcestershire banner
- The sponsorship of Worcestershire County Cricket Club reached more one million viewers
- The live web stream of European Wheelchair Basketball Championships was viewed 350,000 times.
- The World Class Worcestershire stand at MIPIM UK was visited by 450 property and business specialists, journalists and developers.
- World Class Worcestershire has been mentioned on Twitter almost 2,000 times.

### **Challenges:**

When audited in the autumn of 2015, much of the activity, so far, appears to have reached local and regional audiences but made much less of an impact nationally and internationally. Activity has been sporadic and not always joined up. Those who have come across World Class Worcestershire have found that more information is difficult to find on or offline. Search engine optimisation has been poor. There has been no ongoing conversation to build up a relationship with potential advocates.

Although World Class Worcestershire has the ability to be an emotional rallying call and a campaign to showcase achievements, pick up in the media has been slow and social media sharing has been modest to date.

Public sentiment to World Class Worcestershire has been shown to be positive. It is an emotional driver which has the ability to engage with target audiences much more effectively than its more functional partners such as Worcestershire County Council and Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership.

To date the potential of this positive sentiment has not been maximised.

### **Campaign plan for 2016:**

The ambition for 2016 is to drive up awareness of World Class Worcestershire with coordinated, online and offline promotional activity reinforced by regular face to face, online and media engagement with target audiences. The regular creation of compelling content including more case studies will improve search engine optimisation and raise the brand's profile on and offline.

Success in 2016 will be measured by an increase in awareness of World Class Worcestershire, including the increased number of connections and visitors driven, directly by an interest in World Class Worcestershire, to the Local Enterprise Partnership, Visit Worcestershire and to Invest in Worcestershire. It will also be measured by enhanced resident engagement with the Worcestershire public sector and by the level of media and social media coverage that World Class Worcestershire attracts.

### **Measureable outcomes:**

**Profile** – raise the profile of the county, the County Council and partner organisations by increasing awareness of and engagement with World Class Worcestershire. To be measured by increased visitor numbers, more online conversations about Worcestershire and increased public awareness evidenced at residents' roadshows.

**Media Coverage** – increased media coverage of Worcestershire locally, regionally and nationally. To be measured through Equivalent Advertising Value.

**Digital Presence** – coordinate the enhanced awareness of Worcestershire by reaching target audiences with bespoke content more effectively across digital platforms such as LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and others.

**Business connections** – Continue to expand business networks through engagement via joined up networking events held under the World Class Worcestershire banner or attendance at targeted conferences.

**The Halo Effect** – By increasing interest and engagement in World Class Worcestershire and through coordinated campaigns, increased traffic will be directed to partner sites including Invest in Worcestershire, Visit Worcestershire, Worcestershire LEP, Worcestershire Business Central, Worcestershire County Council and Worcestershire Next Generation. These will be measured against agreed targets.

**Building a better reputation** – Reinforcing the Council's corporate aims and residents' priorities by showcasing achievements and sharing positive stories with engaged audiences.

**Positive Partnerships** - increase the number of opportunities for partners to come together to showcase Worcestershire under the banner of World Class Worcestershire. Success will be measured by the number of new business connections made at networking events which are run in partnership with the Local Enterprise Partnership and promoted and showcased by World Class Worcestershire.

**Audience engagement** - Evidence tells us that World Class Worcestershire is seen as a positive brand. Further enhance that positive sentiment with compelling content and campaigns that drive up engagement figures through tools such as Viewpoint and business and residents Roadshows