

4. HERITAGE MARKETING REPORT

Recommendation

- 1. The Museums General Manager recommends that the progress made in delivering museums and heritage marketing projects be noted.**

Background Information

2. Service marketing has focussed on our individual venues' events and exhibitions programme and through this approach the visitor figures for all three sites saw a 9% increase in July. The Art Gallery & Museum saw the highest July visitor figure for 4 years. Adult tickets for The Commandery increased by 26% and family tickets by 177%.
3. Due to the focus on building audiences through the Year of Liberty & Democracy events programme, more visitors are now coming to The Commandery from outside Worcester, with roughly 30% of audiences for each major event being from outside the City, thus having a positive impact on income from admissions.
4. The spring Stanhope Forbes exhibition at the Art Gallery attracted 19,000 visitors, illustrating that our 'destination exhibition' approach continues to be successful. 51% of visitors to Stanhope Forbes England came from outside Worcestershire and 81% of visitors were attracted to visit the Art Gallery because of the Forbes exhibition. Comments from visitors included: "Chadding in Mounts Bay – one of the great paintings of the 20th century. A fine exhibition well worth the drive from Newlyn to Worcester." The series of Bite Size Art talks continues to attract audiences with the talk on Stanhope Forbes being run 3 times in one day due to demand.
5. A braver approach to creating a visual identity for our major exhibitions and events provides strong stimuli for our potential visitors to respond to, echoing the marketing activity of larger attractions such as Warwick Castle.
6. Way of the Warrior summer exhibition at the Art Gallery & Museum welcomed over 16,000 visitors and benefitted from a strong visual identity which was utilised on large billboards as well as flyers, screens and advertisements. The exhibition was launched with a special Private View for Worcester News competition winners. One winner commented "A huge thank you for such an enjoyable time...my hubby, granddaughter and myself all really enjoyed it, we found the exhibition very interesting." Importantly the Private View is a stimulus to get those who attended spreading the word and recommending the

exhibition to family and friends. The summer exhibition enjoys a much more local audience, with 40% of visitors coming from the city.

7. With the appointment of our Digital Marketing Assistant we are strengthening our presence on social media; we now enjoy a following on Twitter of more than 6,000 and are reaching new audiences by joining in with themed 'hashtag' campaigns; our tweet of a Jurassic Fish for #FossilFriday achieved 13,000 impressions. The new Commandery E-newsletter has more than 2,500 subscribers, enabling us to talk much more directly to our visitors and deepen our relationship with them.

8. A partnership with the Worcester News is providing access to rarely seen objects from the collection; each Saturday in the 'Your weekend' supplement the newspaper features a chosen object from the collection with its story and an image. This partnership will generate the equivalent advertising value of £26k over 12 months.

9. Nationally we continue to work with Destination Worcestershire to build the profile of the heritage and cultural offer of the city and county and have contributed advertising to the Visit Worcestershire official autumn / winter guide.

10. Our work with other city and county partners also generates valuable marketing opportunities. We were very pleased for our city venues to be part of the #WorldClassWorcestershire WCCC campaign, featuring Way of the Warrior, and the Worcester BIDs Motor Festival through the inclusion of the Stanhope Forbes exhibition in their marketing materials. The Hive continues to be supportive by providing access to their audiences via their electronic screens which have carried advertising for Way of the Warrior and Battle HQ.

11. Museums Worcestershire is a partner in the county's Magna Carta 800th celebrations, having devised The Commandery's Year of Liberty & Democracy events programme specifically to be a part of the 800th celebrations and to build audiences for The Commandery. Events so far have included a programme of author talks organised by the Battle of Worcester Society, major public events such as Oak Apple Day and Battle HQ, and also other events including a Citizenship Ceremony. Inclusion in the national LiberTea celebrations led to national media coverage including a feature in My Weekly magazine which has a readership of over 100k.

12. We were very pleased to work with the Worcestershire Youth Cabinet on the LiberTea event, which included their Tea-bate. This has led to The Commandery hosting two

more WYC events; the regional element of the national 'Make Your Mark' Vote Count in October and Takeover Day in November.

13. As an organisation Museums Worcestershire continues to seek to raise the profile of heritage in the city. We are working with the Battle of Worcester Partnership on the establishment of 'Worcester - The Civil War City' and are in discussions with County Highways on appropriate boundary and battlefield signage. We are involved in the Cathedral Quarter project funded by the County Council's Open for Business board and continue to work with Worcester BID and County Transport on heritage interpretation signage.

14. The award from Arts Council England Resilience Fund is funding a Customer Relationship management (CRM) system. We are currently identifying which system will be appropriate for our needs. In time adoption of the system will allow us to deepen our relationships with existing visitors and free up marketing spend to attract new audiences to our sites.

Contact Points

Specific Contact Point for this report:

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Background Papers

In the opinion of the Museums General Manager the following are the background papers relating to the subject matter of this report:

Arts Council Resilience Fund application 2015-17
Worcestershire Youth Cabinet Tea-bate report