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°CLOA Case Studies: Visitor Economy and Growth

Purpose

For information.

Summary

This paper presents a number of case studies about councils' leadership role in the visitor economy.

Recommendation

Members are asked to note the case study.

Action

To be taken forward by officers as directed by Members.

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Contribution of heritage to growth and the visitor economy

Wakefield's heritage investment programme

1. In Wakefield district there is recognition of the value of heritage and the impact it can have on tourism and economic growth. Heritage sites and events are a key driver for tourism across the district and this has been supported by an on-going programme of investment across council managed and privately run heritage sites.
2. This includes a completed £3m investment by the National Trust at Nostell Priory - a 17th century palladium mansion and gardens and a £2.5m refurbishment of Wakefield Cathedral to offer flexibility to deliver events. The National Coal Mining Museum has also completed and opened a £870k new section of the Underground Tour and a glass topped mine shaft, to add to its existing industrial heritage offer.
3. In the city centre, Wakefield Theatre Royal, one of the smallest remaining Frank Matcham Victorian theatres still in use, is planning a £2.5m refurbishment and has just been successful in applying for £152k of Heritage Lottery Money to prepare a bid for the project.
4. The Council, working alongside partners such as English Heritage and Waste Recycling Environmental Limited (WREN), is undertaking an on-going investment in its castle sites, from the recent award of £114k legacy funding for Sandal Castle and Chantry Chapel to £200k conservation works at Pontefract Castle contributing to a £3m application to the Heritage Lottery Fund to support the long-term development of the site. This investment, boosted with a series of heritage events, some of which have attracted national attention, resulted in Pontefract Castle increasing visitor numbers by 66% in 2011, compared with the previous year.
5. The district's festival programme is also delivered around the heritage themes of Rhubarb, Liquorice, Victorian Christmas and 1950s Seaside in the City. Three of these festivals have achieved visitor figures of over 130,000 in 2012, with the four day Victorian event still to take place in November.

The growing heritage visitor economy in Barnsley

6. Barnsley Museums, including Cannon Hall Museum, Park & Gardens, the Cooper Gallery, Worsbrough Mill Museum and Elsecar Heritage Centre, attract 1 million visitors a year, contributing in excess of £13m a year to the local economy. The value of the visitor economy in Barnsley is growing and the Council is committed to working with the private sector to enhance this much further. Barnsley recognises the value of heritage and investment in its visitor attractions as a key strand of the Council's Economic Strategy.
7. Cannon Hall Museum, a flagship attraction, has around 500,000 visitors each year. The interpretation of the park and gardens are being transformed following a grant of £50k from the Heritage Lottery Fund. And a further £100k of European funding will enable

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improved interpretation of the Hall itself. Future plans include a major £3.5m funding application to restore and transform the Park, Gardens and Lakes. Should this be successful, work is hoped to start in 2014/5.

8. Elsecar Heritage Centre currently attracts 325,000 visitors per year to the industrial workshops of the Earl Fitzwilliam, one of the most powerful men in Britain at the time, and the wider village that he directed the creation of from the 1790s. Elsecar has been described as being one of the most important industrial heritage sites in the world. £500k from the Heritage Lottery Fund and English Heritage has been secured to realise the immense potential of the site, focussed on the conservation of the world-famous Newcomen Engine. Elsecar is a major visitor attraction but is also a hub for economic activity; there are 38 businesses on site employing around 200 people.
9. A new multi-million pound museum, Experience Barnsley, opens in summer 2013. Funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund and the European Regional Development Fund, this promises to be a major attraction right in the centre of Barnsley, directing footfall and spend to businesses in the Town Centre. It will be a signpost for visitors to the town to discover what the rest of the Borough has to offer.

The Staffordshire Hoard Mercian Trail

10. The Staffordshire Hoard, an internationally renowned find of Anglo-Saxon gold and silver, was discovered in Hammerwich, just outside Lichfield in July 2009. Soon after its discovery, a partnership of councils, including Birmingham City, Stoke-on-Trent City, Staffordshire County, Lichfield District, and Tamworth Borough, and Lichfield Cathedral came together to help raise the money to save and care for the hoard, and to maximise its long-term benefits across the region and further afield.
11. Their shared strategic vision is to create galleries and displays about the hoard, the Kingdom of Mercia, and the region's rich Anglo-Saxon heritage that will excite and inspire local, national and international audiences, alongside educational programmes and opportunities to deliver business growth.
12. To thank local people for their donations to secure the hoard through the 'biggest ever public give' to art, a summer tour was arranged in 2011. It visited Stafford Shire Hall, Lichfield Cathedral and Tamworth Castle between 1 July and 18 September 2011, attracting over 50,000 with an estimated economic impact of over £1.5m. The regional tour was also used to launch the partnership's commitment to deliver a permanent Mercian Trail, and to establish the region as the heartland of Anglo-Saxon Britain.
13. Partnership working, and the commitment and support from the acquiring councils, Birmingham City Council and Stoke-on Trent City Council, and their museums played a vital role in the development of the summer 2011 tour and the emerging Mercian Trail.
14. The Staffordshire Hoard has the potential to shine a light on the rich Mercian heritage and expose regionally significant stories in a linked and meaningful way, as well as to generate a wide sense of civic pride and maximise economic regeneration through

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development of the visitor economy. This ambition is echoed in the strategies of the Local Enterprise Partnerships, and Enjoy Staffordshire's visitor economy strategy.