REPORT

To: Warwick Town Council Economic and Tourism Committee 16th November 2023

1. Purpose: The purpose of this report is to update the Economic and Tourism Committee on the Visitor Information Centre activity by the Visitor Information Centre Manager.
2. Background: The running of the Visitor Information Centre (VIC) is carried out by the Visitor Information Centre Manager who is also the Administrator of the Council’s allotment sites with support from a team of three staff, volunteers and town ambassadors. The Manager is required to submit a report to each Economic and Tourism Committee meeting, and this is that report.
3. Report: The Visitor Information Centre is fully open and operating seven days a week.

VIC Activity:

1. **Town Guide.** We have received delivery of the town guide, there are links available should an electronic copy be preferable.
2. **Guy of Warwick Exhibition**. This is now on display until the week before Christmas.
3. **Cards for Good Causes**. Support over 70 charities and in the run up to Christmas have pop up shops in various locations throughout the UK, we are delighted this year to once again have the cards on sale at the VIC, sales to date are similar to last year. Sales are approximately £6500 in total, with 10% commission going to the VIC.
4. **Craft Fair.** The next craft fair is on the 2nd December and further dates are planned for 2024. and a further craft fair is planned for December. A leaflet is being produced to advertise the fairs.
5. **St Mary’s Christmas Tree Festival.** The VIC will be decorating a tree at St Mary’s Church. On the 23rd November, as part of the Victorian evening, the VIC will be selling charity cards and Christmas gifts at St Mary’s. This also helps to promote the VIC to the many visitors who pass through the church on the evening to look at the Christmas trees.
6. **Escape Arts.** We have on display two busts in the VIC until the 23rd November, commissioned by Escape Arts as part of a community celebration to mark the Coronation of King Charles III, the exhibition is called ‘It’s Reigning Cats and Dogs, they were also commissioned to yarn bomb several post-boxes in Warwick Town Centre.
7. **New Year.** The information boards will be the main focus until the HMS Warwick exhibition in February. Lots of plans are underway to continue to encourage footfall to the VIC, including craft fairs, coffee mornings and trails.
8. **Warwick Words History Trail.** Started from the VIC and was very well received, this encouraged a lot of local families to visit us. Thank you to the Warwick Words team for organising it. We were able to engage with a lot of people who wouldn’t necessarily visit the VIC and inform them that we are here for the local community as well as visitors to the town.
9. **Next two months.** The VIC team will be doing all the administration for the Tree of Lights on behalf of Warwick Rotary, in December we will be issuing Mayor’s vouchers to Warwick residents and the charity cards will continue to attract footfall. As the season quietens down, we can start on the behind the scenes work, updating the website, planning for 2024, making sure leaflets are up to date plus many other tasks.
10. **Website and social media** From January to October 2023 the Visit Warwick website has had 57,000 Users with 114,000 page views. 77% of Users are from the UK. The Visit Warwick social media (Facebook, Twitter and Instagram) platforms have in total 10.5k followers. The website and media platforms contribute towards supporting the local economy and attractions as well as encouraging footfall to the Visitor Information Centre and Court House
11. **Shelving.** The new shelving has been assembled and is eye-catching. The stock is now very easy to see and has been well merchandised. The original shop area is likely to be reserved to showcase the work of local artists and smaller exhibitions. I will report on this at the next meeting.
12. **Footfall.**

Please see the comparison table below, this includes domestic, international and local, the breakdown is; Domestic 11730, International 2963, Local 3887. We are unable to compare local figures with 2022 as the breakdown to include local figures commenced in 2023.

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| VIC |   |   |   |
|   | 2023 |   | 2022 |
| Month | Total | Month | Total |
| January | 945 | January | 1021 |
| February | 1286 | February | 1643 |
| March | 1394 | March | 2232 |
| April | 2061 | April | 2409 |
| May | 1992 | May | 2740 |
| June | 1945 | June | 2438 |
| July | 2361 | July | 3317 |
| August | 2558 | August | 3351 |
| September | 2078 | September | 2204 |
| October | 1960 | October | 2333 |
| November |   | November |   |
| December |   | December |   |
| Total | 18580 | Total | 23688 |

1. Recommendations: The committee is asked to:
	1. To note this report
	2. To raise any questions

***Liz Healey***

***Visitor Information and Box Office Manager***

***9th November 2023.***