

(NEW INITIATIVES) Communities Scrutiny Committee - 6 Dec.2012

a) Service wide improvements

Actions Taken	Comments / Detail
Annual Membership	Introduction of an annual membership allow access to Plas Newydd, Ruthin Gaol & NCyD increased the product offer to the visitor
Social Media	Development and use of sites specific Facebook & Twitter pages has allowed promotion & access to a wider audience
Customer feedback	Comprehensive customer surveys have been used for the 1 st time this year. This has given constructive feedback on what we are doing well and on areas for development
Education	Redesigned & delivered educational programme, according to need, following consultation with schools
ICT investment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allowed more effective use of booking systems for group bookings Meant greater ease of communication between sites & visitors
Shop stock	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greater range of products along with rationalisation of existing old stock resulting in better sales
Staff consultation & training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased staff 'buy in' to service development & reduced anxiety over future Processes for staff management put in place to ensure that DCC policies are applied as appropriate and fairly, increasing confidence in management 'World Host' training start of a more customer focussed approach
Collection management investment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investment in new racking in collection store allows the Ladies of Llangollen's collection to be moved to safe, suitable environment Investment in micro climate controlled cases in Plas Newydd means that collection left on site is kept in suitable conditions Support from Bodelwyddan Castle Director, Dr K. Mason has meant a greater understanding of collection management issues
Weddings & Paranormal bookings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 weddings were held at Plas Newydd in 2012 (none in 2011). 2 weddings at Plas Newydd & 1 at Ruthin Gaol booked so far for 2013 Paranormal bookings are slightly down on 2011 number (largely due to the current economic climate) but promotional drive to attract paranormal companies has begun and has already resulted in 1 new company making 3 bookings for 2013
Income	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Income 2012 season are 4% higher than 2011 season

b) Nant Clwyd y Dre

Actions Taken	Comments / Detail
Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) funding for Lord's Garden Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Joint project with Countryside Services supporting HLF bid & project management input Consultation with public, Friends, Town Council & Members undertaken Volunteer Coordinator for project recruited. Initial 6th month research phase of project started
Development of Friends & Denbighshire Heritage Services (DHS) relationship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular Friends & DHS meetings held DHS supporting Friends events with Health & Safety advice, providing signage for events Ensured that Friends were included in consultation regarding Lords Garden Project Looking to develop long term plan for effective use of monies raised by Friends.

Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very successful Friends events with Macbeth & choir at Nantclwyd y Dre this year. • 1st 'meet the people of Nantclwyd y Dre' successful
--------	---

b) Old Gaol, Ruthin

Actions Taken	Comments / Detail
Events programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased attendance & more effective marketing, in particular at family market • Well thought out & executed events by allowing Heritage Assistants 'freedom' to use their skills in research & delivery
Exhibition & education provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project started to clear double cell in basement to be revamped as secure exhibition area & for use as education work room

b) Plas Newydd site

Actions Taken	Comments / Detail
Development of a ten year Management Plan for the site 2012 -2022, which identifies:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • areas for potential community involvement / future development • a series of objectives which fulfil the criteria of the Green Flag Award. • a management plan covering conservation and maintenance of the grounds
Carry out improvements to the Café & Courtyard area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase number of "covers" via: new seating, new York stone paving, parasol to cover courtyard. Upgrade tills to provide data on visitor numbers and spend profiles. Agreed service level agreement (SLA) with Catering Services, and improved menu
Maintenance of Grounds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree SLA with Public Realm • Introduce annual tree inspection with follow up programme of work • Apply granite chippings to all pathways • Engage Probationary Service team to assist with maintenance • Develop volunteer group to assist with maintenance (three currently engaged) • Project implemented with Friends of the Earth to create an allotment
Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formed partnership with Countryside Services to develop Minibus Service calling at Plas Newydd and other sites of interest in the Dee Valley (seasonal) • provide Minibus Service on specific days from the town to Plas (holiday periods) • marketing leaflets to promote site distributed to local hotels ,campsites (& beyond)
Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved (and more popular) events programme – e.g. dog show (Educational as well as a fun day) Mazda Car run – over 60 cars visited site on tour of North Wales • Rotary Fete, etc.

b) Collections Management

Actions Taken
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved dialogue with CyMAL to address the issues surrounding the management and storage of the collections.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage with staff at Bodelwyddan Castle to procure specialist expertise.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop funding bid in order to provide additional staffing resource to bring the recording of the collections up to date.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upgrade ICT equipment to avoid duplication of entries and to ensure all records are fully backed up.

Latest financial position.

Communities Scrutiny - 6 December 2012

BUDGET MONITORING REPORT FOR NOVEMBER 2012	
Total Cash Limited budget (£9k service saving was offered-up at start of year)	£ 220,349
Actuals To Date	£ 195,976
Commitments	£ 21,525
Total Expenditure	£ 217,502
Forecast Out-turn	£ 244,991
Forecast Variance (overspend) *	£ 24,642

* we have had a full period of maternity cover to deal with this year.
Also, a senior manager left in June, and has not been replaced.