

WIRKSWORTH HERITAGE CENTRE

BUSINESS & MARKETING CONSULTANCY BRIEF

1. Background

Following a successful application to the National Heritage Lottery Fund (NHLF), a grant of £1.3million was awarded to Wirksworth Heritage Centre. This was to be used for the renovation and extension of the property on St John's Street bequeathed to the previous Heritage Centre.

The Mission, Vision and Aims for the Centre are included in the Appendices.

The Centre comprises a shop, a café, a studio and a museum. Trustees took part possession of the new building in October 2018, with the retail and cafe areas completed. Delays with the building work impacted on the installation of the museum which was not completed until April 2019. This has had a knock-on effect to the financial health of the Centre.

As well as the 3 core trading areas, the Centre generates income by running a wide range of events (e.g. guided walks, heritage talks, craft workshops, challenge evenings), from local groups hiring the centre, from fundraising and donations.

With only 11 months of trading in its full capacity, the Centre was closed because of COVID-19.

Immediately prior to closure, while not yet generating sufficient income to turn a profit, there were promising trends of improved sales in the café and the shop.

During closure, the Trustees and General Manager have looked closely at the finances and operation of the Centre and have prepared a Business Plan for NHLF (albeit in draft form at this stage). Our analysis shows that, based on our current projections, income will be below total outgoings by several thousand pounds per quarter. Outgoings are a combination of staff costs and overheads.

Also, during closure, our independent Interim Evaluation Report (required by NHLF) was completed. This has highlighted several areas for consideration. One such area is marketing and the need to reach and create interest amongst target audiences, more cost effectively, to build visitor numbers.

Copies of the Centre's Business Plan (and supporting documents) and Evaluation Report will be made available when the contract is awarded.

2. Purpose

To survive, the Centre needs to consider different ways of managing all aspects of the business – structural, operational, commercial, heritage. The purpose of this work is to identify new, creative ideas that will build a sustainable future for the Centre.

When findings are presented, all proposals need to be substantiated with income and/or cost projections.

3. Objectives

- Identify more effective and cost-efficient options for structuring the business (including team structure, roles & responsibilities, trading arm and charity restructuring) to enable financial sustainability, with the objective of reducing overheads.
- Identify ways of improving existing income streams (café, shop, museum, events, room hire, fundraising, donations) and new income streams, to include digital opportunities
- Propose new ideas for marketing and promotion of the Centre to our target audiences which are more cost efficient and increase visitor numbers across all elements of the business. To include how effectiveness of spend can be evaluated
- Present options for updating the Centre's website, to improve the customer experience and to increase our ability to promote the Centre and specific activities.
- Present a short report on tax issues to consider (VAT,etc).
- Present a full Business Plan for 5 years, drawing on the plan recently developed by the Trustees and General Manager.
- Present financial information relating to the Business Plan including budgets, cashflow and fundraising strategy.
- In the current climate, to present a short term Covid survival plan.

4. Budget

This work is covered by a grant from NLHF for £9000 inclusive of VAT. The proposal cannot exceed this amount.

5. Requirements

- Written proposal to be sent to Sally Barkley-Smith by <date>
- The proposal must be fully costed, inclusive of all activities and expenses
- The proposal to include a clear methodology and a timetable of activity, including the date for presenting findings to Trustees
- Details of who would be working on the project
- Details of anticipated access to Trustees for additional information gathering

Wirksworth Heritage Centre is now open with the Good to Go mark to show that we are Covid compliant. Access to the Centre and time with Trustees, staff and other relevant parties will be available as well as documentation to show the current situation and measures undertaken during lockdown.

APPENDICES

MISSION, VISION & AIMS

Wirksworth Heritage Centre is a charity and a company limited by guarantee. The company was incorporated on 4 May 1984 with charitable status. The organisation's charitable objects are described as:

The objects for which the centre is established are to advance by all such means as are charitable in law, education in, research into and knowledge and interpretation of the history and development of the town of Wirksworth in Derbyshire, for the benefit of the public in general and of the inhabitants of Derbyshire in particular and for such purposes to establish a heritage centre in Wirksworth with museum and related educational facilities.

2.1 Mission

To preserve, promote and make accessible the stories of the town and people of Wirksworth.

2.2 Vision

To be an independent, financially sustainable heritage organisation, which, through the use of its museum collection and outreach learning programmes, will be making a relevant and widely valued contribution to the culture and economy of Wirksworth.

2.3 Aims

To become established as an independent financially sustainable heritage-based business enterprise.

- To proficiently manage and preserve the museum collection, and make it more accessible to a wider range of audiences
- To establish the new heritage centre as an enjoyable and rewarding visitor experience which makes a positive contribution to the economy of the town.
- To create and deliver a programme of entertaining events and educational activities for local people, schools and visitors.
- To establish the new heritage centre as an effective social resource and learning space, valued and well-used by the community of Wirksworth.
- To provide an enjoyable and fulfilling environment to enable staff and volunteers to learn and develop.

To use any financial gains for the benefit of the Heritage Centre.