



Annual General Meeting
11am Thursday 20th November 2014
The Town Hall, Bridgnorth

Attendees:

Caroline Barr – Bourton Manor, Carol Cooper – Vice Chair, Nicola Delves – Bridgnorth Town Hall Curator, Peter George – Daniels Mill, Nadine Holland-Bailey – Bridgnorth VIC, Tim King – Shropshire Council, Simon McCloy – Shropshire Tourism, David Robinson – Company Secretary, Laura Rogers – Halfway House Inn, Jodie Stephen – Shropshire Tourism, Emma Spenser – Bridgnorth Library, Sally Tallents – Hobnill, Anne Wilson – Bridgnorth Town Council, Anthony Webb – Chairman, Peter Williams – Halfway House Inn

The Chairman, Anthony Webb welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked Nicola & Anne for the venue.

1. Apologies

The following apologies were received:

Connie Baines – Bridgnorth Town Council, Mike Brogden – Ferndale Flat, William Cash – Upton Cressett Hall, Catherine Collier – Shropshire Hills Discovery Centre, Karen Crick – RAF Cosford, Catherine Evans – Broome Park Farm, Nicola Hook – Dudmaston Hall, Judy Harvey – Green Holiday Barns, Tracey Johnson – Shropshire Council, Louise Lasance – The Birdhouse, David Mee – Severn Valley Railway, Althea Meredith – Hardwicke Farm, Lyn Pope – Washouse B&B, Dee Revell – Bramley, Rob Weston – The Severn Arms

2. Minutes and Matters Arising

The minutes of the 2013 AGM were reviewed and declared as being a true and accurate record.

There were no matters arising.

3. Chairman's Report

In addition to the Chairman's Statement forwarded in advance of the meeting together with the AGM papers, Anthony Webb presented his report.

He spoke of planning issues that had been brought to his attention over the last year, including proposed windfarms. He asked the members if they would be happy for the association to act on their behalf when asked to object or support various planning applications. There were conflicting views from members as to whether this was a good idea. Some felt the association should stay impartial in such matters and it was not really the remit of the association to comment either way. It was decided that the matter would be discussed at the board meeting to follow.

4. Treasurer's Report

David Robinson presented the final accounts for the year ending 30th June 2014.

He stated that the Association were this year looking at a small deficit of £82.

David said they had not received funding from Shropshire Council this year in the form of an SLA, but they were extremely grateful for the funding they had received from Bridgnorth Town Council. He also stated he was always looking at other possible funding opportunities. The association did have a surplus of £20,000 that they could call on if needed as the income from the brochure was reducing each year.

He took the opportunity to thank Anne and the Town Council for the complimentary room hire they provided for the board meetings and AGM.

He then asked the AGM to approve the accounts.

Proposed – Carol Cooper

Seconded – Anne Wilson

All members in favour.

5. (i) Election of the Board

Simon McCloy presented the election of board members, all existing members had indicated a willingness to re-stand, with the exception of Sally Tallents who had decided to step down after many years on the board.

This left a vacant seat that they had received a nomination for, Caroline Barr from Bourton Manor. Simon stated they originally had two nominees, however William Cash had withdrawn his nomination prior to the meeting.

The members were asked to accept the re-appointment of all existing board members on block, along with nominated board member Caroline Barr.

Carol Cooper
Anthony Webb
David Robinson

Karen Crick
David Mee
Rob Weston
Nicola Hook
Caroline Barr

Proposed – Anne Wilson

Seconded – Nadine Holland-Bailey

All members in favour.

(ii) Election of Directors

Simon also presented the election of directors, all existing directors had indicated a willingness to re-stand

Carol Cooper
Anthony Webb
David Robinson

Proposed – Anne Wilson
Seconded – Peter George
All members in favour.

6. Any Other Urgent Business

Chairman Anthony Webb informed the AGM that Sally Tallents was retiring from the board this year after many years of service. He thanked Sally for all her help support and advice over the years and presented her with a leaving gift.

Sally stated she had enjoyed her time with the association, but felt as she no longer ran a tourism business it was time to stand down.

The members showed their appreciation for Sally's contribution to the association and wished her all the very best.

The AGM was brought to a close by the Chairman at 11.30am.

Update from Shropshire Tourism

Anthony introduced Simon McCloy to present an update from Shropshire Tourism.

Simon gave a brief introduction to the organisation, how they were set up and the activities they were involved in. He highlighted how they were the only self funded tourism organisation in the country, with no funding from the local authority.

He went on to explain how the joint membership agreement set up in 2009 worked, the secretarial and company support that was provided as part of the agreement, the advice and support given to members, etc. He also mentioned the subsidised website www.visitbridgnorth.co.uk provided by ST, and the member web entries that showed on that site, powered by the ST database and maintained by the ST staff. Simon also mentioned that Shropshire Tourism had been contracted to produce the visitor guide on behalf of BDTA since 2007.

He also took the opportunity to dispel the myth that when the joint agreement started, Shropshire Tourism took the membership fees previously paid to BDTA. This was not true, as with the other tourism associations, the members simply stopped paying the old fee to the individual tourism associations, saving most members money in the long run.

Simon also pointed out the significant support the association now receive from Bridgnorth Town Council.

He went on to highlight the challenges the association were facing, and would face, in the future with regards to the reduced income they were receiving through brochure advertising, and the lack of funding from Shropshire Council and how they could counteract this by moneytorising the website.

He pointed out the high number of website click throughs the members were receiving through their entries on the site and how this could be turned into income for the association. The average number of click throughs for an accommodation business over a year was 600, therefore if 15p was charged per clickthrough the association could charge £90 per business for the entry, or even at a more modest figure of £30 per business, at 105 members, a possible revenue figure of £3,150 could be made for the association.

It would also be beneficial to engage with the retail and catering sectors, selling entries to them on the website.

Simon asked the members if they had any questions.

Sally asked if the situation was the same for the other tourism associations. Simon stated that similar talks were being had, or had already taken place, with the other associations, with varying outcomes.

Simon ended the update by stating that closer working relationships were the way forward for BDTA with Shropshire Tourism, Bridgnorth Town Council and others.