



Wave Leisure Trust

Newhaven Fort Annual Service Delivery Plan 2018/2019

"Inspiring Active Lifestyles"

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Background

On an annual basis Lewes District Council (LDC) is required to furnish Wave Leisure Trust Ltd (Wave) with an "Annual Service Statement" that provides the Trust with a framework to produce an Annual Service Delivery Plan.

On 1st May 2015 Wave was granted operational management responsibility for the Newhaven Fort. This plan sets out the key actions that Wave will focus on for the 2018/19 financial year.

The Fort procurement exercise focused on four core outcomes, namely:

1. Enhance the regeneration opportunities in Newhaven by increasing the number of visitors to Newhaven Fort and generating local job opportunities.
2. Maintain and grow the heritage and educational potential of Newhaven Fort in a way which is accessible to the general public.
3. Improve the current facilities on offer.
4. Minimise the ongoing liabilities of the Council and potentially produce a revenue stream for the Council.

Annual Service Delivery Plan (2018/19)

In order to achieve the four LDC outcomes, Wave has identified three separate but interlinked areas for the Fort Management and Operational Team to focus on within this Plan, namely:

1. Experience.
2. Education.
3. Events.

The key actions in this Plan are detailed under these three headings and will, if successfully implemented, meet the LDC four core outcomes. To ensure consistency and a positive compound effect, several of the key actions are a continuation of those used in prior years. The targets are however increasing year on year as the Fort develops.

Heritage Lottery Fund Heritage Grant

It was anticipated that a Round 2 application would be submitted in August 2018 which was then delayed to November 2018. LDC however recognised through the process that the "Renaissance Project" as proposed, was at significant risk because of undercapitalisation. The size of the overall funding required to make the project successful was in reality, greater than the resources currently on offer. Therefore, rather than push ahead with an undercapitalised and potentially compromised project that may well fail to achieve 'take off velocity,' LDC decided to defer a Round 2 HLF submission.

LDC, Wave and other partners need to create a more robust and holistic solution for the Fort during 2019 and assess the long-term viability of the Fort as part of the cultural and visitor economy of Newhaven and Lewes District as a whole.

Figure 1: Outcome 1 - Experience

LDC Key Priority 1

“To improve the overall visitor experience at the Fort, making it a great destination for all the family and one which encourages repeat visits”

Wave Action	Measure	Target	Outcome
Deploy visitor feedback/satisfaction system to track experience and identify areas for improvement.	System deployed with at least 350 responses received.	350	186 surveys completed
Visitor feedback has been consistently monitored although completion rates did not reach target.			
Measure the percentage of visitors rating their visit as “good” or “excellent”.	Percentage of visitors rating their visit as good or excellent	80%	89%
89% or respondents rated their visit as good or excellent.			
Achieve positive Trip Advisor ratings from visitors.	Rating of minimum of 4 out of 5 stars from 2018/19 respondents.	4.0 stars or above	92% 4 star or above
Total 39 reviews, 25 5 stars, 11 4 stars, 2 2 stars, 1 1 star.			
Continue with new Season Ticket pricing strategy based on less than 2 visits per year to encourage sales.	Increase season ticket holders by 5% from 2017/18 numbers. (Target based on 17/18 year end forecast)	290	252
252 live season tickets as of 31/03/19. Although this is under target, family ticket sales were significantly over target. (below). It is therefore possible that visitors are picking the family ticket option over the season ticket option.			
Increase the number of family visits through the implementation of a stimulating and vibrant programme of activities and targeted promotions.	Family ticket sales increase by 5% from 2017/18 levels. (Target based on 17/18 year end forecast)	4,650	5,720
5720 family visits recorded which is very positive. This may be due to a more family focussed approach to the Fort marketing.			
Promote the benefits of Gift Aid on season tickets/admissions to maximise revenue from each UK Taxpayer visit.	Amount of Gift Aid recovered from HMRC.	£6,000	£3,335
Gift Aid uptake has not met target. It’s possible that persuading visitors to pay the additional gift aid charge at a time of austerity is a challenging ask.			
Implement measures in Tea Rooms such as menu development, special offers, to encourage greater usage and spend per head	Spend per head achieved (target based on 5% increase of 2017/18 actual).	£2.10	£2.17
Active development of Tea room has been the responsibility of the Catering Manager with support from Fort staff. This has been managed through menu review, bespoke event offers and development of customer experience through monitoring of standards.			

Implement measures in the Shop such as improved displays, new product ranges, promotional pricing, to encourage greater sales and spend per head.	Spend per head achieved (target based on 2% increase of 2017/18 actual).	£0.85	£0.75
Despite active development of shop and sales through POS refresh and new product ranges the target has not been met. In line with broader spending patterns across the UK, this may be in part due to consumer preference for online shopping.			
Through improved marketing and promotion, increase the visitor sales.	Spend per head achieved (target based on 5% increase of 2017/18 actual).	£4.20	£4.12
Visitor spend per head has not achieved target. This will be due to decreased ticket sales.			
Design and implement new Quiz Trails to enhance the fun/learning and engagement by young people.	Percentage of visitor feedback as good or excellent.	80%	N/A
Feedback on this particular area is not specifically sought but the Barrack Rat trails were designed and launched in the summer holidays. Additionally, seasonal trails were launched at Easter and Halloween as well as a world cup challenge whilst the world cup was on. All initiatives were well attended, and 'soft' feedback was very positive			
HLF Heritage Grant Round 2 application to be completed and submitted	Application submitted by August 2018 deadline	August 2018	N/A
As highlighted on page 5, the HLF Grant is currently on hold.			

Figure 2: Outcome 2 - Education

LDC Key Priority 2

“To ensure that the educational offer for schools is current, relevant and one which children will find interesting and fun.”

LDC Key Priority 3

“To ensure that the exhibits and displays are well presented to maximise their educational value.”

Wave Action	Measure	Target	Outcome
In 2017, Educational Consultants (“Heritec”) were appointed, funded as part of the HLF Transition Fund bid to review all aspects of the educational offer and recommend new activities for implementation. This work included the implementation of a promotional campaign to attract more schools which commenced in the spring of 2017 and remains ongoing.	Maintain alignment to Heritec’s review work and resulting action plan and enhance where appropriate to ensure the programme remains current, relevant and one which children will find interesting and fun.	100%	100%
Heritec review and affiliated action plan has been referenced when planning has been undertaken for programming changes and developments.			
Increase the number of school pupil visits from 2017/18.	School pupil visits to increase (target based on 5% increase from 2017/18 forecast at year end)	5,682	5,026
4872 primary students, 154 secondary students.			
Increase the number of schools that visit the Fort.	Schools visits to increase (target based on 5% increase from 2017/18 forecast at year end)	125	124
88 primary schools 33 language groups 3 Secondary schools			
Implement a tracking system that allows simple analysis of visiting schools.	System to monitor key metrics such as; Local Education Authority, number of children, year group and purpose of visit.	100%	100%
All school and language school visits from 2018/19 are logged and recorded			
Design and prepare updated pre-and post-visit resources for primary school visits covering WW1 and WW2.	Resources developed with good feedback received from schools on relevance to national curriculum.	100%	100%
A range of pre and post visit materials and resources remain available all year including over the summer months via the Fort website in time for the September term. Schools can download all the resources they require to ensure their learning outcomes are delivered.			
Further develop the “Handling Box” experience to enable more than one school to visit concurrently.	To develop 3 more “Handling Boxes” with artefacts/props from WW2/Home Front.	100%	100%

There are a total of 6 boxes so the Fort can offer two schools the experience at any one time. Some limitations to the offer exist in terms of spaces to do it in and technology to support it (currently only one laptop and projector)			
Provide a range of exhibits/objects on a “Hands-On Table” for Fort visitors with interpretation provided from staff/volunteers.	Hands-On Table available every day of public opening.	266 days	266 days
Operated every weekend and school holiday day. In addition, this is offered most weekdays in term time			
Implement a school visit ‘offer’ for the new Ancient History Education Centre.	To attract minimum 10 primary schools (c.300 children) to visit the new resource and using their feedback to make improvements to the visit/learning outcomes.	10 schools 300 children	Delayed
There has been some delay in rolling this out, but 2019 bookings are already in the diary. Ancient History package now complete and ready for launch.			
Recruit volunteers with education experience to assist with education visitors.	Number of volunteers recruited and used on school’s programme.	2	2
Recruitment for volunteers in this area has not been necessary as enough resource currently exists.			
Increase number visits by international/foreign language students by 5%.	Number of international students to increase (target based on 5% increase from 2017/18 forecast at year end)	1,350	1,314
1,314 language students visited. Although only just below target, some reports indicate that the volume of international students coming to the UK is in decline.			
Using the MODES software, to catalogue the Fort exhibits.	To have at least 75% of the Fort’s exhibits catalogued on MODES (c.15,000 exhibits).	11,250	11,250
All the exhibits are catalogued on MODES and are being reviewed and updated individually by the Collections Manager and a team of volunteers.			

Figure 3: Outcome 3 – Events

LDC Key Priority 4

"To provide and promote a wide range of appealing events to attract more visits."

Wave Action	Measure	Target	Outcome
Develop an events Marketing Strategy for 2018 to clearly identify the approach to external communications with existing and potential customers.	Marketing Strategy developed and implemented.	100%	100%
Worked in partnership with Flamingo Marketing who produced the marketing plan and materials until the end of 2018 season.			
1. Promote a wide number of appealing events. (All targets based on 5% increase from 2017/18 forecast at year end)	Internal (Fort organised)	12	8
	External hire	7	10
	Partnership (Fort/Partner Collaboration)	7	16
<p>Internal - Talks in the tea room, 1940s day</p> <p>External - Fort Process, Newhaven Families Forum Fun day, 7 paranormal investigations</p> <p>Partnership - Belonging Festival, 2 x cinema screenings, Meeching Amateur Dramatics Music Hall shows, 6 x Ghost Walk, 2 x car shows, 2 x Living History events, WW1 Remembrance Bike Ride, Beacon lighting</p> <p>Whilst internal events were down on target, it is encouraging that both external hire and partnership events exceeded target.</p>			
2. Increase attendance at events (All targets based on 5% increase from 2017/18 forecast at year end)	Internal (Fort organised)	800	362
	External hire	1,900	1,220
	Partnership (Fort/Partner Collaboration)	600	3,226
3. Achieve income target for events.	Target achieved (target based on 5% increase from 2017/18 forecast at year end).	£16,800	£15,353
In line with the number of partnership events, income exceeded expenditure. Unfortunately, under performance in the other two categories means that overall total was below target.			
During October half term, promote Halloween activities to attract family visitors.	Increase income generated over the 9 days of half term by 5% above 2017 actual.	£18,342	£18,534
The Halloween event at the Fort was once again popular and exceeded target.			

Promote a Christmas Market and Santa Claus experience to attract visitors and revenue at a time the Fort is normally closed to the public.	Visitor number target achieved.	800	0
This event was run at a loss in 17/18 and, therefore did not go ahead in 18/19.			
Promote the Fort as a venue for Paranormal adventures/ghost hunts.	Increase number of bookings from 2017 by 10%	9	7
9 booked but 2 cancelled by the organisers for internal reasons.			
Actively market the Fort as a wedding venue.	Number of wedding bookings secured.	3	3
3 weddings took place during summer of 2018.			
Promote <i>"Talks in the Tea Rooms"</i> to engage and entertain.	Number delivered.	6	6
6 talks delivered – 65 tickets sold.			

