



The new cohort of City Guides are nearing completion of study and exam, with many volunteering for the OCH Wednesday Living History events during school holidays.

Escape rooms are thriving. Mainly due to concentration of sales using dedicated social media channel, and new ideas/feedback and interaction from the public. 80% sales target reached for weekend activity, with new Halloween puzzle launching in October already on sale.

TikTok is now live for Visit Ely, with each reel gaining over 500 views. The channel is very influential for visitor demographic 25-40. Visit Ely newsletter has well over 2.5 K subscribers, mainly due to sign up option when you are directed to our new website. Weekly news goes out every Friday.

Mrs Bennett gave a brief explanation regarding forthcoming events, in particular what is available for Heritage Open Day's and Halloween month.

Plans are coming together for the biggest 'Apple Day' yet, which this year extends on to Cross Green with Ely Cathedral full permission. The response to trade at this increasingly popular event has been overwhelmingly successful. Mrs Bennett gained a sponsorship deal from Thorlabs, the funds will be used to enhance the event, with entertainment. The team would like to express their thanks to Thorlabs. Thorlabs will have a stand at the event for exciting recruitment opportunities, which of course Visit Ely and team will be promoting.

Mrs Bennett also explained that via Mr Routledge and a visit from Mr and Mrs Simpson, a very kind donation of 17<sup>th</sup> Century costumes/accoutrements and historically accurate weapons have been received and will be used for re-enactment/tours and display. The team and the City of Ely Council are extremely grateful.

Mrs Bennett was also very pleased to announce that OCH was awarded the 'Traveller's Choice 2023' award and is nominated again for Visit England 'Hidden Gem' and is 'Visit England' accredited. The Ely Standard/Cambridge Times and Spotted in Ely covered the story.

Cllr Phillips and all members present gave praise and thanks to the team and expressed how much positivity came from the T&TC 8 weekly meetings.

## **5.To discuss Town Centre Management**

Cllr Warman proposed that issues surrounding 'Town Centre Management' be discussed within the Communications and PR Working Group of which she is Chair. Mrs Bennett raised that various issues have been mentioned on-line about the City of Ely Council having direct involvement with the Town Centre, the shops, and other issues. It was agreed that this would be discussed at the Communications and PR Working Group. Mrs Bennett explained that the comments on social media from the public had been addressed. It was also suggested that a comment regarding landlords and high street issues on City of Ely Council would be referred to East Cambs District Council. Cllr Chris Phillips suggested that the T&TC Committee drop the 'town centre' element. Cllr Phillips said this would be discussed at the Personnel, Finance and Governance Committee meeting.

## **6.To discuss Volunteers for OCH/SH**

Cllr Banyard and Mrs Bennett are planning a meeting to discuss Volunteers. A job description for the Volunteers pack (created by the Deputy Clerk, Mrs Jay) was in the process of being written, and meetings were planned with the Cathedral Volunteers Manager, for guidance. Cllr Banyard kindly opted to assist with plans and moving forward.

## **7. Budget Updates for OCH and SO**

No significant issues were raised when the budgets were discussed aside of OCH overheads. Cllr Warman did point out that the income generated is very encouraging and noted that this was down to Mrs Bennett and team.

## **8.To receive an update regarding the digital signage project and the Visit Ely App**

A brief overview of signage was reported via Mrs Bennett from Mr M Routledge, who has been working on the project and it's safe delivery. Advertising opportunities will shortly be available, and Mr Routledge is actively working on sales starting mid-September.

## **9.To discuss Christmas Lights SO event**

Several meetings have been held to discuss the event returning to Market Square on the 24<sup>th</sup> November, and working collaboratively with Ely Markets. The event and how the switch on will take place has yet to be agreed at Full Council. Mrs Bennett to discuss with Mrs Coulson for FC Agenda and Mrs Jay for the next sub-committee lights meeting in September.

## **10. Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be held 16<sup>th</sup> October 2023.

*The meeting closed at 8.00pm*