



**VISIT LISKEARD**  
FOR THE EXPLORER IN YOU

# Liskeard Information Centre

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Update since 20th December 2017

## Visitor Numbers

As you will see from the attached figures, we had more visitors in January than we did in 2017 but quite a lot fewer in February than at the same time last year, I think this is mainly due to the dreadful weather we have had for much of the winter. As you will see profits in January and February were up on the same time last year.

## Tourism Summit

On 8<sup>th</sup> February I attended the Visit Cornwall Tourism Summit in Newquay. There was a presentation from Visit England outlining their current priorities, they also ran through some of the latest visitor research:

- Strong domestic tourism – rise of the staycation, 2/3 of domestic trips are of less than 3 nights
- 1/3 of bookings made less than a month before the trip
- 2016 saw record numbers of inbound visitors thanks to the weaker pound making it more affordable
- Ageing society – need to cater more for less mobile visitors but be aware that baby boomers are now reaching retirement age and are very much young at heart
- ‘Pursuit of Real’ – visitors don’t want to think of themselves as tourists, they are looking for an authentic experience – want to do what the locals do
- People want to learn new skills on holiday – Airbnb now selling experiences such as cookery or art classes – ideal for getting people in out of season
- Perception of Cornwall – visitors like the beaches, find us welcoming and like the quality food and drink, they find Cornwall poor for shopping, ease of getting here and culture (generally cities score well in these areas)

There was then a talk by GWR:

- Increasing capacity on the mainline will allow them to run 2 trains per hour between Plymouth and Penzance at fixed times past each hour – this will allow for better integration with bus services
- New intercity express trains being introduced from July 2018
- Old high speed trains will be reconfigured and used to replace the current 2 carriage trains
- Introducing Wi-Fi at all stations in Cornwall (except Coombe Junction)
- New history app for the Looe Valley Line

Next there was a talk by Malcolm Bell from Visit Cornwall:

- Challenging time for tourism providers – costs such as wages and energy prices are increasing but customers don’t want to pay any more

- Accommodation providers increasingly questioning the value of the quality rating schemes, they are seen as expensive, rigid and less relevant in the era of Trip Advisor etc – Visit Cornwall are going to be offering a basic inspection for around £100 that guarantees members are legal, safe and clean
- Continued dominance of the online booking sites – Visit Cornwall trying to encourage visitors to book direct
- Our main competition – Yorkshire, Lake District, New Forest, Suffolk and Devon
- Cornwall is seen as expensive but is considered good value for money
- They are pushing May and June as ideal times for overseas visitors to come to Cornwall as there are more daylight hours than there are in September
- Big focus on the environment – aiming for Cornwall to be the first county free of plastic water bottles

Finally there was a very interesting afternoon session about customer excellence with Geoff Ramm, he talked about ways to make your business stand out and how to offer fantastic customer service.

### **Closure due to staff sickness**

On Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> February the TIC was closed as I was ill and could not arrange cover. I called a caretaker and he put a closed sign on the door but unfortunately I did not have any contact details for the museum volunteers, nor did I have access to a rota to show who was due in so I could not call them to tell them not to come in. We have procedures in place for arranging short notice cover during the week when the office is open but, unfortunately, this has highlighted a problem at weekends. I should point out that having to keep the TIC closed is an extremely rare occurrence but I will be working with the museum to work out the best way to deal with this issue should it arise again in the future.

### **Annual Stock Take**

We will be closed on Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> March for our annual stock take. As of today the TIC is holding stock to the value of £3,120 which has a potential profit of £6,355, we also have £1,670 of museum stock in the shop which has a potential profit of £2,168.

**Vicky Cutts**

26th February 2018