

Outdoor Industries Working Group

Wednesday 28th September 2011 @ 2pm

Venue: Moreland Minema, Mill Yard, Morland, CA10 3AZ

Minutes

1. Introductions

Andrea Runkee, Richard Greenwood, Jody Ferguson, Robin Ashcroft (Chair), Tim Foster, Freddy Markham, Ron Rutland, Lindsay Gibson, Paul Noble, Barry Surtees, Andy Airey.

2. Apologies

Bruce Lawson, Carol Renshaw, Derek Bigland, Justin Grammer, Nick Owen, Elspeth Mason, Johan Hoving, Dave Chambers.

3. Minutes from the last meeting – 24 May 2011

The action points were reviewed. AR gave a verbal update on the 'Future of the OIWG' as an agenda item later in the meeting. The OIWG were emailed regarding road show events after the last meeting, Lindsay Gibson took up the offer and attended the Great North Swim, and the Bushcraft Show. RA has the list of non attendees and will contact them after Kendal Mountain Festival. Bluestone Events as Keswick Mountain Festival will be invited to join the OIWG as it is a significant event for AdCap.

Action: AR to invite Kate and Lucy at Bluestone Events to join the OIWG.

4. Matter Arising

The proposed West Coast development at Cleator Moor was discussed by the group and RG gave an update on the plans and rationale behind choosing the location. The group felt that they should get behind the venture. If the project is delivered to planned timescales it is expected to open in the spring of 2014. It was suggested that a representative of the project should be invited to the next meeting.

Action: RG to invite Andy McNay to the next meeting.

The Adventure Hub at Keswick Information Centre was discussed. The group felt that it still wasn't being run as efficiently and commercially as it could be, and the LDNP would benefit from a commercial input from the OIWG.

Action: RA to invite Richard Leafe to the next meeting to discuss the Adventure Hub at Keswick Information Centre.

5. Booking Agents

Cumbria Tourism's web team have received a request from a member and advertiser who feels it would be beneficial to the consumer if a distinction was made on the website between advertisers who acted as booking agents and those who delivered activities directly. The group discussed the pros and cons of making this distinction and it was agreed that if done properly it may be beneficial to the consumer.

Action: LG and EM to discuss appropriate wording and advise AdCap.

6. Adventure Guide 2012

AR asked the group if they felt a 2012 Adventure Guide would be of value. Previous guides were circulated for discussion. It was felt that although the Tracks style publication was very well done it

wasn't a practical size for people to pick up in county. The group would prefer something in the style of CT's 'Best of Lakeland' guide. It was suggested that incorporating Smartphone barcodes to the guide to drive traffic to a webpage might reduce the cost of print.

Action: AR to get guide cost and research Smartphone barcodes.

7. Future of the group: post March 2012

The current AdCap project is due to close on the 31st March 2012 so the group were asked to consider what would happen to the OIWG after that date. Although there is a RGF bid for an AdCap 3 capital development project and CT are looking at ways of extending the project with ERDF or DEFRA funding the group were asked to base their discussion on the worst case scenario. This would be that the project closed on the 31st March 2012 and Cumbria Tourism would no longer have financial or staffing resources to deliver any activity.

The group felt that if CT still had a need for advice and support then the group should continue to offer that. It was acknowledged that without funding to deliver activity then the group may have to meet less frequently and it may be better to meet in response to specific issues and possibly act more as a lobbying body for adventure businesses in Cumbria. It was felt strongly that Cumbria Tourism should still be involved as the umbrella organisation and that there would still be a need for a representative from CT to co-ordinate and administer the group.

The group stressed that they felt Cumbria Tourism's involvement would be crucial for the future of the group and that it would be a shame if AdCap was lost completely due to a lack of resource.

Action: AR to provide an update on funding and Future of OIWG as an agenda item for the next meeting.

8. Partner updates

The group provided updates on the year to date. There is a mixed picture across the industry but it was agreed that although footfall was up at many sites visitor spend is down and consumers are still being cautious with their money.

Honister Slate Mine have meeting with Natural England and LDNP to try and reach an agreement over the Via Ferrata and Zip which is due to close on the 7th November 2011.

Keswick Mountain Festival will take place next year but the Theatre by the Lake is not available as a venue so Rawnsley Hall will be used instead.

A new mountain biking trail at Grizedale will open next year, developed by Grizedale MTB. The NT are looking at developing the site at Fell Foot as it has good access roads and parking. No detailed information available yet.

The AALAs consultation is out now. A self certifiable code of conduct has been suggested as a replacement but this raises interesting challenges over how it would be policed.

Ticket sales are going well for Kendal Mountain Festival. This year is looking good, the challenge will be in 2012 when public sector funding, including that from AdCap will be no longer available.

9. AOB

Action: AR to circulate dates for a January 2012 meeting.