

Report: Surrey Hills Enterprises CIC – Up-date Report

Date: 27th March 2019

Written by: Wendy Varcoe

Purpose of Report: To provide an up-date on progress against the Business Plan and Annual Actions for 2018-19

Recommendations

The Members are asked to: Note the progress and developments against the Annual Actions and give feedback on the plans for 2019.

ANNUAL ACTIONS – 2018-19

❖ Objective 1 – Support Business development in the Surrey Hills

Inspire and support entrepreneurship and business development with a focus on environmental sustainability - clean growth

Member Services

To support the planned up-lift in marketing and Member Services, Maggie Howell has been appointed as Marketing and Events Officer, starting in March 2019. This is a key new appointment to support the delivery of Member services, marketing and member recruitment.

The aims are to significantly increase the level of marketing support to Members by:

- Increasing traffic to the Surrey Hills Website
- Building the number of people receiving the public e-newsletters
- Significant up-lift in social media coverage – widening the reach and developing inspiring content
- Improving the stories and visual content about Surrey Hills businesses

Surrey Hills Member Brochure

A new high-quality visual brochure profiling Surrey Hills Trade Marked Members is being produced. It will be widely distributed and will highlight the experiences, local produce and services in the Surrey Hills. Sponsorship is being sought to support the design, print and distribution.

Member Support & Training

The autumn and winter programme of skill-based workshops and seminars has been successfully delivered with increasing number of members attending and with workshops ranging from social media workshops to business planning and marketing.

The workshops have become increasingly important to support Member to Member collaboration and connections and we are seeing some excellent cross marketing and collaborations now in place.

The new Member Workshop programme from June to December is currently being planned.

❖ **Surrey Hills Enterprises Member to Member Showcase** - Wednesday 3rd April 2019, 6-8pm

To further encourage collaboration and connections a Member showcase to help Members to cross market and build connections is being held hosted as a gift by Gate Street Barn.

Membership Recruitment

Membership is continuing to increase with 16 new Members since January. Members are also more active with an excellent range of inspiring events and news items being added to the Surrey Hills website and increasing engagement.

Applications for the Trade Mark Surrey Hills Award are assessed and awarded against the following criteria:

- ✓ **Local provenance**
- ✓ **Quality – product / service & customer care**
- ✓ **Environmental Sustainability**
- ✓ **Support for Surrey Hills**



To give a flavour of the range and quality of Members, recent new Members all located within the Surrey Hills include:

- **Surrey Hills Adventure Company** – outdoor adventure and activities to re-connect children and adults with the outdoors
- **Surrey Hills Yurts** - An eco-friendly luxury yurts holiday site in the Surrey Hills
- **The Packhouse** – a very special shopping venue housing a mix of luxury homeware, vintage and antiques in a 400-year-old hop kiln
- **Cow Shed Start-up** – supporting start-up businesses through tools and training and increasing the success and profitability of existing businesses.
- **Celebrant of Surrey** – ceremonial services for all life stages and working with many of the Surrey Hills venues

❖ Objective 2 - Promote Surrey Hills to businesses and people

Build and promote a premium Surrey Hills brand based on the quality of the environment and the local produce, artisans and services.

- *Events - Deliver a programme of events which promote the special nature of Surrey Hills and its local businesses*
- *Marketing campaign- Deliver a targeted marketing campaign focused on local businesses which enhance the visitor experience, such as tastings, artisan trails, courses, events*
- *The Trade Mark Surrey Hills - Develop the 'Trade Mark Surrey Hills' into a widely recognised brand of quality and local provenance*

Member Annual Event & Celebration – Wednesday 27th Feb, 7-9pm

80 Businesses from across the Surrey Hills gathered for the first Surrey Hills Enterprises Annual Celebration and Awards in February. The event was hosted as a gift by Barnett Hill Hotel in Blackheath.

Jim Glover, High Sheriff of Surrey formally opened the event and congratulated the businesses on their Trade Mark Surrey Hills accreditation as a mark of local provenance and quality.

Event Aims

- ❖ Celebrate Surrey Hills businesses
- ❖ Highlight the Trade Mark Surrey Hills and make the first Gold and Young Entrepreneur awards
- ❖ Inspire networking and collaboration between Members

2 Gold Awards were made to Surrey Hills Members who have excelled in their collaboration with other businesses, improving environmental sustainability and conserving the Surrey Hills.

The Gold award was made to Surrey Hills Enterprises Members who have excelled in one or more of the following:

- Excellent **collaboration** with other Surrey Hills businesses
- An initiative to improve **environmental sustainability** or inspire others to improve sustainability
- **Support for Surrey Hills** - a project that conserves or enhances the Surrey Hills landscape, heritage or which improves the rural economy

The Gold Trade Mark Surrey Hills was awarded to Shere Kitchens and to Clandon Wood Nature Reserve & Natural Burial Ground. The Award recognises their collaboration and active support for Surrey Hills and their joint initiative to plant elm trees at Clandon Wood to connect to two populations of a rare butterfly. The initiative was inspired by their Surrey Hills membership and is an exemplar of businesses with sustainability and collaboration at the core of their business.

A new category 'Surrey Hills Young Entrepreneur' was awarded to 2 talented young people who live in the Surrey Hills and who have developed outstanding skills within their chosen field. Luke Whatley-Bigg of Photography Possibilities, an outstanding photographer, videographer and qualified drone pilot working at a very high standard has produced a range of Surrey Hills films including the Surrey Hills Wood Fair and is working with other Surrey Hills Members to produce videos of their work.

Jack Kerr of JK Forges is an outstanding Blacksmith who has honed and developed his skills and is producing outstanding pieces of work and taking on commissions. Bringing to life again a traditional country skill Jack has developed an inspiring range of products and has showcased his work and skills at the Surrey Hills Wood Fair.



Key Events 2019

The event management for all the key events in 2019 is now underway.

- **Surrey Hills Sculpture Garden – 4th May – 2nd June** with an Arts Festival weekend showcasing local artists and food on 25th, 26th and 27th May
- **Surrey's Rural Economy Conference - Friday 12th July** – with key speakers to highlight the issues and opportunities for the rural economy. Michael Gove, Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs is confirmed as the key note speaker.
- **Surrey Hills Wood Fair – Saturday 5th & Sunday 6th October 2019**
- **Fantastic Food Festival, Surrey Hills – Saturday 14th and Sunday 15th September 2019**

The proposed new 'Countryside Skills and Produce Fair' with Merrist Wood College has been postponed to 2020 due to the imminent merger.

❖ Objective 3 - Environment

Conserve & enhance the Surrey Hills as a local and national asset.

Greenscape Facilitation programme summary

The Greenscape programme is continuing to provide a successful collaboration of landowners and managers to work together to improve their woodland management and enhance biodiversity and access. The project is entering its second year and is supported by the Forestry Commission, Surrey Hills AONB and Surrey Hills Enterprises and facilitated by Lantern and Petra Billings woodland consultancy.

❖ **Objective 4 - Strong Financial basis**

Build a financially stable organisation that is resilient and with the resources to deliver its objectives.

New Corporate Partners – Gatwick and Kier have become Corporate Partners joining Charles Russell Speechlys, Wilkins Kennedy, Lexus Guildford, Birtley House, Surrey County Council and Wates Family Enterprises.

The continuing support from Corporate Partners and the new Partners provides a stronger financial basis to support this next stage of delivering the Business Plan.

Sponsorship – Barclays Bank have confirmed their sponsorship of Surrey's Rural Economy Conference.

SURREY HILLS ENTERPRISES - Team

Patron: Michael More-Molyneux, Lord Lieutenant of Surrey

Directors

- ❖ Simon Whalley, Chairman and Chairman of Birtley House Group Ltd
- ❖ Rob Fairbanks, Director Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- ❖ Cllr. Mike Goodman, Surrey County Council, Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport
- ❖ Ian McCulloch, Director Silent Pool Gin Distillery
- ❖ Tim Metson, Coverwood Farm and Lakes
- ❖ Sue Sturgeon, retired GBC Chief Executive
- ❖ Cllr. David Wright OBE, Chairman Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty & Guildford Borough Councillor

Ambassadors:

- ❖ Chris White, Chief Executive of Denbies
- ❖ Mark Lebus, Chief Executive of LC Energy

Advisor: Ann Moriarty

Executive Director: Wendy Varcoe MBE

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