

LTOS ITEM 399)

Rye Town Council

From: "Ian Russell" <ianrussell@cinqueports.org>
To: "Deal Town Council" <themayor@deal.gov.uk>; "Dover Town Council" <mike.webb@dovertown.co.uk>; "Faversham Town Council" <Faversham.TownCouncil@virgin.net>; "Folkestone Town Council" <lawrence.avory@folkestone-tc.gov.uk>; "Hythe Town Council" <admin@hythe-kent.com>; "Jayne Butters" <jbutters@hastings.gov.uk>; "Lydd Town Council" <townclerk@lyddtown.org>; "Margate Charter Trustees" <cheryl@margate.org.uk>; "New Rpmney Town Council" <nrtownhall@hp2000.co.uk>; "Ramsgate Town Council" <mayor.ramsgate@btconnect.com>; "Rye Town Council" <townhall@ryetowncouncil.gov.uk>; "Sandwich TC" <tracey@sandwichtowncouncil.gov.uk>; "Tenterden Town Council" <townclerk@tenterden.gov.uk>
Sent: 27 March 2010 18:35
Attach: dvd_order_fm_ws.pdf
Subject: Cinque Ports Marketing Campaign and the David Starkey DVD
 Copy by post to: The Town Clerk of Winchelsea

Dear Colleague,

Amongst other topics, I plan to report to the Standing Joint Committee, on 21 May 2010, about progress of the Cinque Ports Marketing Campaign following last year's launch of the David Starkey DVD and the new 24 page leaflet.

Amongst other issues being considered by the Campaign Steering Group, are possible measures to exploit the growing and substantially un-tapped market for group visits by clubs, societies and other organisations. In the case of the Cinque Ports collectively, this might include local historical societies, organisations like Round Table, Rotary, Probus and Soroptimist Clubs and a wide range of other groups whose objectives are not specifically focussed on historical topics, but who work hard each year to put forward an interesting programme of visits, talks etc. for their members. Despite the challenging economic climate which can be expected in the coming months and years, demographic trends mean it is likely that the demand for such visits (whether day trips to single destinations or tours lasting several days) will continue to increase.

Currently, commercial operators do not see this as a viable area of operation and, in the case of the Cinque Port towns there is the added problem that different groups have widely varying interests and criteria. Few would wish to visit all member towns in a single trip, preferring to explore what is on offer in a single town or, increasingly in a cluster of towns. Inevitably, commercial operators will struggle to cater for such diversity of demand.

The unique product which the Campaign partners believe that they could offer group organisers is a single point of contact with whom they could discuss their interests, available time, budget etc. and who would then propose an itinerary (including overnight accommodation where appropriate) to meet those requirements. This would complement the efforts of individual towns and tourism marketing consortia to promote their own areas and attractions, whilst appealing to a wider market.

To exploit this potential, we need to be able to make it easier for group travel organisers to provide opportunities for their members which casual/individual visitors cannot experience and which those organisers would find difficult and/or time-consuming to arrange for themselves.

The reason for my writing to you at this stage, is to alert you to this issue in advance of the meeting on 21 May and to ask you and your colleagues to consider what your town could contribute to this 'group travel offering' if the Confederation agrees to support the initiative.

We think that the groups which we have in mind will be particularly interested in the seafaring history of the Cinque Port towns, as well as their civic traditions etc. I know that some of your towns already organise guided walks, talks by local historians, guided tours of your historic town halls etc. In these cases, it might simply be a case of providing a summary of what is offered and the point of contact, so that they can be added to a suggested itinerary. Others may wish to put together new 'experiences'. In particular, there does seem to be considerable interest in opportunities to view historic civic 'regalia', plate, etc. and to learn more about it from the mayor, town-sergeant or some other authoritative source.

If there are additional costs involved (e.g. in opening buildings at times when they would normally be closed to the public, other staff overtime, honoraria to volunteers or providing simple refreshments, etc.) then these could be passed on to the group concerned as part of the 'package'.

Hopefully it will be possible to offer one or more 'experiences' per town, lasting up to (say) three hours each, which can then be offered to groups as part of a bespoke itinerary in a single Cinque Port town or a cluster of towns, varying in length from a single day upwards. If you could discuss this with your colleagues and indicate, by 23 April, whether your town would be interested in participating and, if so, what 'experience(s)' you might be able to offer, then I will bring these together in my report to the Standing Committee, so that a more informed and productive discussion can take place.

I look forward to hearing from you by 23 April.

Turning to the David Starkey DVD, I have received a number of requests from member towns and voluntary organisations to purchase supplies of the DVD for re-sale to the general public at local museums, visitor centres, etc. I am now in a position to respond to these requests. If there are any such outlets within your town (whether run by your Council/Corporation/Trustees or by independent voluntary bodies) copies of the DVD may be ordered using the attached form and I would be grateful if you will pass copies to those concerned, in your town. Please note that the minimum order quantity is 10 copies.

The following organisations/outlets have already expressed interest in re-selling copies of the DVD and I would be grateful if the appropriate Town Clerk will pass copies of the order form to the relevant person in each case:-

Rye Heritage Centre
Rye Castle Museum (Jo Kirkham)
Winchelsea Court Hall Museum
Rye Harbour Nature Reserve (Barry Yates)
Rye Tourist Office

Regards,

Ian Russell
Registrar of the Cinque Ports