



Visit Dursley

Minutes of Meeting

On Zoom - Tuesday 12th November 2024 at 10:30am.

Present:

Leah Wellings (Dursley Town Council (DTC)), Cllr Andrew Rowe (DTC), Amy Helliwell (District Tourism Officer), Charlie Marwood (The Engine), Emma Cruise (VIC/Library), Chris Shaw (Dursley Welcomes Walkers (DWW), Andy Barton (Dursley Heritage Centre), Miranda Clifton (Cam Parish Council), Laura Pardoe (Cotswold Hern Centre), Helen Williams (Helen's Wishes), Julie Orchard (Ashen Plains)

1. Welcome & Introductions

Cllr Andrew Rowe welcomed everyone and Emma Cruise to her first the meeting.

2. Apologies received

Cllr Sue Creswick (DTC), Brigid Schoombie (Belle's Kitchen) and Rosie Powell (Dursley Farmers Market).

3. Confirmation of the 13th August 2024 Minutes

The above minutes were confirmed.

4. Matters Arising from the Minutes

The following points were noted:

- It was noted that the Sainsbury's Manager had been made aware of the issues with the Castle Street information boards being blocked by vegetation. Improvements should be made soon. **Leah to chase again if required.**
- Cam Parish Council had been approached about working together on signage at the Station/raising awareness amongst new residents to the area. **Leah had been asked by Cam to approach them again in the new year.**

5. Update from Stroud District Tourism Officer, Incl. Market Town Vitality Fund

Amy (SDC) gave an update and the following points were noted:

- Regarding grants from the Market Town Vitality funding - Dursley and Cam had received funds towards Christmas lighting. (This amounted to £12,000 for Dursley to upgrade lighting fixtures to control shopfront trees, with the work being undertake in time for November 2025)
- A 12 days of Christmas trail was being developed for the walking app.
- Christmas song – 'Christmas in the Cotswolds' was trying to get to number 1, not yet sure if Stroud District would feature!
- Amy was asked for assistance to help re-engage management at the former Pulse, following the rebranding/structure into 'Active Lifestyles Dursley' – a rep had previously attended the Visit Dursley meetings and helped to advertise/get involved in local events (e.g. venue for Walking Festival banners). It was hoped this could continue. **It was AGREED to make contact with the manager.**
- WWT Slimbridge Wetland Centre and Tortworth Court both nominated in the South West Tourism Awards – winners to be announced in December.

6. Update on Town Map

- The Town Map had been finalised, with a last-minute name change relating to the rebranding of The Pulse to Active Lifestyles Dursley.
- The map would be available on the notice board in town soon and could also be found online, [here](#) .
- Thank you to all who commented and contributed.

7. To Consider Website Project & Planned Networking Meeting

- It was noted that the domain name and hosting had been set up for the new website – discoverdursley.org.uk . Chris and Leah had been working on this.
- Work would start to develop the site and a temporary landing page would be created, for the time being it would redirect back to the Discover Dursley pages of the Dursley Town Council's website.
- It was suggested that Discover Dursley hold a networking meeting in January at The Engine to engage interested people/traders across the town, using the website's development as a topic of discussion and to generate ideas.
- **It was AGREED that the Networking meeting would take place in January after trading hours** to encourage traders on the high street to come along.

8. The Action Plan

- It was noted that the Action Plan would be updated for the Networking Meeting and refreshed.
- The group considered a draft Business Card template and trial. Overall people felt that it was a good idea to trial at accommodation providers and in shops (they are small enough to be given out with receipts). It was felt that there could be a market for a card and a fuller leaflet. Feedback from venues (The Engine/Ashen Plains/VIC) indicates that many people photograph information. Although a QR code is a good idea we need to be aware that some people don't have smart phones or know how to use QR codes. The card should have a suitable back image that shows off the character of Dursley. **It was AGREED to set up a trial for the card.**
- The creation of some Insider Guides was discussed including some draft questions/ideas. The guides would create content that could be used across different platforms – online, social media, leaflets etc. To enable the project, **Helen AGREED to co-ordinate a small group meeting** to include – Helen, Laura, Charlie, Julie and Leah.
- Laura gave an update on developing Dursley as a 'Herb Town' and the creation of the new Cotswold Herb Centre UK. The website can be found at - <https://cotswoldherbcentre.uk/> There are regular blog posts and an events calendar. One of the regular events is Thyme to Read at the Chantry Centre. Charlie offered to help promote at the Engine, Miranda also suggested Cam Parish Council office/rooms as possible venue for workshops if required. Instagram and Facebook pages would soon be launched.

9. Plans for Lister D 100th Celebration at Ashen Plains

- Julie gave an update on plans which are at very early stage.
- The event at Ashen Plains would take place on 18th, 17th and 18th 2026.
- Charlie highlighted that the Chantry Centre celebration would take place in 2026, there would be some joined up activities/co-ordination. The Escape Room was looking at developing a Lister themed game.
- It was noted that a Lister's Trail would be developed in 2025 for the Discover Stroud Trails App. **(Leah to liaise with Andy on this)**
- **Regular updates on plans to continue, to help facilitate co-ordination.**

10. To receive general updates from members, including:

Dursley Welcomes Walkers (DWW)

- Chris gave an update on feedback following the festival which took place 2nd – 6th October.
- Although smaller it was successful; 300+ individuals attended walks.
- Radio Gloucestershire featured the festival every day, promoting the town to their listeners.
- The current email mailing list has 1200 people and finances are in a good position.
- Chris has stepped down from his DWW role and is involved in a handover, the steering group of 12 have volunteers ready to take over and help out.
- There are plans for a bigger festival for 2025.

Festive Dursley Christmas Lights

- Festive Dursley and the Town Council are getting ready for the 29th November Christmas Lights switch on event in town.
- There will be the usual stalls, music entertainment, fireworks, fairground, snow.

Pedersen Gathering in Dursley

- Plans for the Pedersen Gathering are underway, with the Veteran Cycle Club getting in touch early.
- The visit will take place 12th and 13th April 2025.
- It will involve market place meeting with the Mayor, cycle round, evening talk amongst other things.
- It's a great opportunity to link up and promote the town's heritage, links to Pedersen and cycling generally. The Council, Heritage Centre and Kingshill House are all involved in various parts of the visit.

Town Postcards

- Some of the traders are interested in selling Dursley postcards and calendars.
- Charlie suggested traders liaise with Steve White who produces a 'Dursley and the Vale Calander' – selling at recent Artisan market. Contact may be able to be made on social media or via the St James Parish Office.
- In the past there had been a book of walks for the town/area that was sold – this could also be explored.

11. Dates for 2025 meetings:

There will be an early evening January Networking Event, date/time to be confirmed.

Zoom meetings, 10:30am start -the date for the February was changed:

- 25th February 2025.
- 13th May 2025.

Meeting finished at 12:10pm

Members are encouraged to work together and share information between meetings.