



Welcome to the Guernsey Tourism Partnership AGM

The GTP was formed to combat the desperate times of the Covid era but the last 12 months have seen some return to a full tourism season and it has provided us with time to understand what has changed and reflect on what we offer and what we may need to do to improve things in the future.

I have spent time going through the last years minutes and the first thing I would like to do is congratulate and thank every single member of the committee who have worked so incredibly hard to get us to where we are now.

So where are we now?

We have seen a steady development of our communication channels. Dialogue with political contacts, committees and civil servants has been impressive and constant. It has also been in both directions, with government seeking our input as an organisation and as individuals involved in the tourist industry.

I will mention a few of the notable:

Transport members have been active within the taxi trade review and the ongoing changes around licensing and plate changes. We have also recently been asked for input into an ambassador accreditation scheme which could lead to a positive wider reaching effect in the guiding community for driver guides.

We have been very involved with the cruise welcome and transport arrangements at the Pier and a lot of hard work has gone into resolving problems highlighted by safety reviews. Alongside this work Amanda Johns in particular has been working hard alongside Visit Guernsey and other bodies to promote the Island to and gather information from Cruise ship companies. We hope to be able to use this information, and the contacts Amanda and others make, to attract more suitable cruise ships to Guernsey, soften public perception and to keep Guernsey's reputation as a premier destination in the European sphere.

The close relationship with Visit Guernsey has happily continued and a monthly meeting with Mary Putra has proved very useful. The Partnership has been offered use of the bus terminus kiosk and Chris Meinke has worked hard to find a way to utilise it to the benefit of Partnership members and visitors to the Island as an information hub close to the transport centre.

We have had input into many other issues both publicly and in private. The relationship between some members and The Little Chapel has been and continues to be challenging. The Partnership wishes to see a resolution in which is agreeable and fair to all and will continue to keep lines of communication open so that the Islanders and visitors can continue to enjoy the calm and peace of this iconic monument

The recent GST debate was an issue that required us to seek the majority view of our membership and lobby government on the issue. These issues will continue to arise in future and I am confident that the Partnership will continue to refine the methods of consultation with members and be effective in lobbying for the membership.

Arguably the biggest change in government tourism planning and organisation came about after consultation of Island industry experts last year by Keith Beecham. The recommendations of the resultant report were not implemented. Instead Economic development sponsored the creation of a Tourism management board.

The decision was not universally accepted by Industry but despite some reservations the GTP committee decided to embrace the change and support the decision. We felt that working with the new body and seeking to influence and inform decision making we would be well placed to help take responsibility for the direction of tourism in the future. We would also be able to be involved in any conversations should the situation develop in future. We felt it was imperative for all our members that we begin the rebuilding of our industry immediately.

Since this decision we have lost our fellow founder and treasurer Hannah Beacom to the role of Chair of the new Tourism Board. I congratulate Hannah on this appointment and hope the new committee will join me in supporting her in the new role.

It has been a long and difficult journey over the last 2 years and also stepping down on this term are fellow founders of the GTP Anna Lisa Detassis and Mike le Conte. I am sorry to see them go after all the pain and hard work we have shared. **But** as always things must change and I am cheered that there will be continuity with Mim, Chris, Andy, and Amanda standing for re-election. I am also encouraged that there are such well qualified replacements willing to join our cause and work.

I see none of the achievements that I have mentioned as successes but merely stepping stones in the constant evolution of the relationship between our tourism businesses, government and the wider needs of the Islands we live in. The challenges stretch ahead of us. I hope the new committee will look to develop a defined efficient structure and look to work alongside other sectors such as retail and hotels to develop a welcoming and vibrant town area. The coastal infrastructure is neglected and urgently needs investment. Sustainability, re-generation, diversification may become words that become more familiar in our future planning and I look forward to the energy and direction that a new committee can bring.