

Visit Kelso AGM

Wednesday 18th May 2022

Welcome to our 2022 AGM.

You have been emailed a copy of our annual accounts to 31st January 2022 which I will refer to in my report.

Subscriptions - £8114

Subscription have remained level in 2021 and we had 135 paid members benefiting from the work carried out by the Visit Kelso team. We would like to thank those that support our initiatives. We can only succeed by working together as a group ensuring we spread the word of all that Kelso and the surrounding area has to offer via our marketing materials, flyers, website marketing, short films, photography and our active social media campaign.

Grant Income

Destination and Marketing Sector Fund

VK were successful in October 2021 to receive a grant of £18000 to promote the town and surrounding area as a destination for off season visits.

Adapt and Thrive

Adapt and Thrive was a successful application in July 2021 where VK received a grant of £10,000 on the basis that we would develop and use existing events and campaigns as sponsorship opportunities for members businesses.

SBC RCTC Grant

Scottish Borders Council Rural Communities Testing Change Fund was set up by the Scottish Government to test an alternative system of funding and VK was chosen as a part of a select group of organisations to apply and take part. We were awarded a fund of £15,000

Kelso Common Good Fund

Visit Kelso applied for £2000 support from Kelso Common Good Fund to assist with our post Covid reopening marketing plan.

Hanging Baskets - £1815 watering revenue, £2118 watering expenditure

Visit Kelso are responsible for the hanging baskets within the town. In 2021 we had 76 baskets and two troughs planted for businesses by Newton Don as well as all the floral displays that businesses put up themselves. The watering service was well used with 90 hanging baskets and floral displays watered by the service run by Visit Kelso.

Those members using the watering service paid £20 per basket for a 12 week period. Visit Kelso funded an extra week's watering from their funds as well as covering the cost of the plant food.

Other Income

Event Promotion for non members

We promoted two non member events in 2021. Members receive any promotion as part of their annual membership.

Christmas market

We ran a successful Christmas market and would like to thank the stallholders who attended. We always give the sub group a marketing budget and this year there was an underspend as the stallholder revenue was stronger than initially budgeted for.

Outside Contractors

Marketing and PR - £10,920 and Social Media - £8600

Visit Kelso are fortunate to have Emily McGowan from McGowan Marketing and Wendy Richardson work for our group in a marketing capacity.

Emily manages our project and funding application work as well as being retained by Visit Kelso on a monthly basis to assist with ad hoc project and marketing work. She assists with strategy and structure within the group. Wendy has carried out all social media postings, campaigns, photography work and created engaging content all for use on all our social media channels. In addition, Jackie Anderson has kindly run our Instagram feed on a voluntary basis and we are very grateful to her for all the work she does for us. Sue Beck handed the reins over in May 2021 and we would like to recognise all the work Sue did for Visit Kelso running in managing the Instagram feed using a lot of her own wonderful photography. Our group could not have performed without the work carried out by Emily and Wendy as well as the volunteers who help.

The increase in both the Marketing and PR and Social Media costs is largely as a result of the extra work carried out by Visit Kelso following our successful funding applications.

Advertising and Marketing - £1657 expenditure

This figure is made up of a £90 donation to the Kelso Laddies programme

In addition, there were costs associated with the events run as part of the Rural Communities Testing Change Fund - Soundwaves £450, Phil Wilkinson £600 and Cross Keys £277.50

We put a £240 VK advert into the Borders bedroom accommodation publication via Landmark

Story Telling - £500 – Texthouse were appointed to assist with story telling as part of the Destination and Marketing off season fund

South of Scotland Membership - £630 to cover our annual membership for members to list on the SSDA website

Great British High Street - £561 New VK membership stickers were designed to include a QR code taking visitors to the home page of our website, a new map was produced as the radius for membership is proposed as a slight change to our current constitution. Strive Digital were asked to do some update work to our walking trails on the website.

BIDS - £884

Part of our successful Town Bids Fund award from 2020 was used to create our Bordering on Bootiful campaign.

Visitors to Kelso joined local residents recently in enjoying an array of floral displays that decorated the town, installed as part of the Visit Kelso Bordering on Bootiful project. Visit Kelso launched the campaign and a series of competitions, aimed at encouraging people to visit, shop, and stay local.

The focal point of the initiative was an oversized pair of bespoke boots, that were brimming with colourful plants, located in The Square. At the same time as unveiling the planted boots, Visit Kelso launched three competitions, encouraging businesses and locals to engage with the campaign.

Christmas Market - £533

£533 was spent on the Christmas market campaign. A sub group from within Visit Kelso ran the Christmas campaign for the town. An advert was placed in Kelso Life to help communicate to all locals and visitors to the area that Kelso was open for business 7 days a week during December.

Website Expenses – Hosting £238

Visit Kelso pay an £21 per month hosting fee to Strive Digital who built and developed the current website and who manage the hosting.

Digital Marketing - £194

£63 was spent on boosting facebook and £131 on our annual Canva pro licence

The bank balance at the year end stood at £49,763.34 as per the balance sheet. Taking into account provisions made to 31st January 2022 of £46,219 made up of £11,197 from the Great British High Street award, £8,800 from Adapt and Thrive, £15,700 from the Destination and Marketing Fund and £10,522 from Rural Testing Change Fund the net cash position stood at £3544.

To summarise, we are working hard to promote the town and surrounding area for the benefit of all members and are grateful for all the support enabling the group to continue with our marketing and promotional initiatives.