

The proposal from Trail Tale [Trail Tale – The Tour Guide In Your Pocket](#) to establish trail around the town was first considered by the Town Council in January 2024 and the following resolution was made under minute point 630/24.

**RESOLVED:- not to progress this initiative but to ask the Civic Society whether they would like to take on this project.**

Wem Civic Society met with the developer of Trail Tale as he is in the process of preparing another bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund to develop Trail Tales in several smaller towns in the West Midlands (further information below). This bid will be strengthened if it has the support of the local council of each town.

The developer has stated that the aims of the project are to encourage visitors to the Town and increase footfall thereby supporting local businesses. 14 towns in the West Midlands are involved in this initiative. The developer is requesting that the council endorses the project and provide TrailTale with the necessary support to submit the application."

#### **Decision needed**

**As it is more than 6 months since the January resolution and following the meeting with the developer additional information about the project has been provided, the council is asked to reconsider whether it wishes to submit a letter of support to accompany the application.**

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#### **Copy of notes provided by Oliver Richardson following a meeting with Rafi Ilivitzky of Trailtale.co.uk**

Wem Town Hall 17t Sept. 2024

Present: Rafi Ilivitzky, Oliver Richardson (Wem Civic Society), Penny O'Hagan (Town Clerk)

#### **Introductory email from Trailtale (The company)**

*Following on from the Wem Town Council meeting I would like to engage with the Wem Civic Society on an initiative to create heritage trails for ten of the West Midlands' smallest towns, funded by a grant from the NLHF. A key requirement from the NLHF is to engage with local historians to assess the town's need for a trail, determine its priorities and focus, and explore how the community can be better represented. We're also looking to uncover unique local stories that could make the trail more engaging and interesting.*

The Town Council asked the Civic Society to meet with Rafi and to investigate possibilities for a town trail.

1. Trailtail have a long records of getting grants and producing videos and town trails across the country. They are currently meeting groups from small towns in Shropshire with a view to producing a series of videos etc. to enhance the visitor

experiences in this area. Towns included are Wem, Ellesmere, Church Stretton, Bishop's Castle and Cleobury Mortimore.

2. Areas of interest include the historic buildings of Wem (many of which remain in Noble Street) and how these could be highlighted on a tourist trail.
  3. Stories of interest about the town could be used. These include 'Old Nelly', 'The Women of Wem' etc. Stress was laid on the non-conformist history of the town. (e.g. in the civil war, and with the number of chapels. The Castle Inn, the Town Hall and the White Horse were mentioned as buildings of historic significance and/or community centres.
  4. The place of the brewing history and the sites of old inns was also stressed. The Civic Society work on this was talked about.
  5. The company was also interested in the people and societies who could provide information on the activities of the town. I have included many of my suggestions in this mailing list, but recipients may think of others.
  6. The company was interested in the reasons why people in Wem have pride in their town, and what would make it of interest as a visitor attraction. Before any material is produced, these individuals will need to be interviewed. They were also interested in the efforts being made as regards improving the environment ('greening')
  7. The number of festivals and markets was stressed. These include the Sweet Pea festival, the cars of interest, Weekly and seasonal markets, Wem Carnival and the Christmas Lights, all of which bring people to the town.
  8. Attractions within easy reach of Wem were discussed. These include Saulton Hall (Shakespeare connection) and Tilley (walk to see a historic village)
  9. Before any material is produced, it needs to be reviewed.
  10. If the project receives funding, then a number of people, especially from the Town Council, will need to be involved.
- **WHY is Wem important**
  - **HOW can this importance be explained to potential visitors**
  - **WHAT benefits will tourists bring to the town.**
  - **WHERE will they go once they get here.**
  - **WHO are the people who are going to operate this tourist system.**