

Pre-COVID19, the TIC has been generating around £12K annually, in profits on stock sold. Before the pandemic, it was the TIC staff view that a much greater shop size in an equivalent premium location could potentially see this income being doubled. Post-lockdown, this is more difficult to gauge. An important point is that currently the income generated is not retained by the TIC for further investment in stock and projects – instead TIC profits are returned to the Town Council’s accounts.

Beneath are some possible ideas, using £ signs as price indicators rather using actual figures.

£ = pounds ££ = tens of pounds £££ = hundreds of pounds ££££ = a thousand pounds or more Note all figures are estimated

Ref No:	Income Generator	Benefit	Cost to TIC	Potential Income	Difference in cost vs income (+ or -)	Cost of current cost provision (if comparable) and explanation of current	Difference of proposed vs current	Risk
1	TIC to provide own images for Christmas card	TIC owns copyright and does not have to pay photographer	Nil - (TIC has an i-pad. Several TIC staff already have own cameras.)	££ - assuming a successful image is chosen and printing is of good quality.	££ profit.	No longer a need to purchase cards from artists. NB. TIC staff already provide many of their own images FoC for promotional purposes	Net gain ££	Low.
2	Online sales using shop page of new TIC website, including gift wrap option, and including p & p charge	Increased customer base so possible increase in sales of existing stock. This has the potential to open up a global market although noted that the current customer base is very localised	Tela costs to set up: £1200 +VAT Annual charge: £1250 rising to £2250 +VAT + PayPal charges per transaction	Hard to say, but would not anticipate high sales direct from website – competition from online booksellers, Amazon, ebay etc	Likely to be a net cost rather than a net profit	No costs currently. High costs to set up online shop for small scale sales. The potential income to be generated is unknown and may not cover overheads	High outlay.	High – very unlikely that profit would exceed set up cost and annual cost. How many customers search for Saffron Walden goods? Would they look on Amazon, Ebay first? Would volume of TIC sales mean prices could be competitive?

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3	Online sales of SW souvenirs and books (with permissions) using third party websites, eg. Ebay, Amazon, Abe books, Facebook shop... Price to include p & p	Greater reach to customers Increased stock sales	£ Third party website commission/ payment fees	£ possibly ££	Likely profit, £ or ££ dependent upon volume	TIC already meets orders on our website which are then placed by telephone and email – taking (goods + p&p) card payments over the phone and then posting out the item(s). The use of this could be further promoted using social media	Profit per item would be less but this should be offset by more sales	Low – worth trialling?
4	Bookable group packages eg. The Saffron Experience – a tasting and tour day out	To entice more groups To encourage a higher end, bookable experience	Substantial investment costs (time and money) Also advertising costs	Low once other costs had been met – tour guide/cost of tasting sessions would take most of revenue	£ or ££ to TIC ££ or £££ to others (tour guide/tasting venues)	No such offer is available. A free (or low cost) self-guided leaflet could be produced as a much cheaper alternative).	Investment needed. BID have been approached but looking unlikely in present times.	High – volume of visitors, especially coach parties and older age groups, very uncertain during and post- pandemic.

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5	Town Hall tours	Better use of Town Hall	Training? Staff member needed – or a volunteer	£ (occasional)	£, possibly ££ over the course of a year	Visitors cannot visit the Town Hall unless it is open for an event.	Some visitors do express an interest in seeing inside.	Low, but visitors would need accompanying.
6	Town Trail translations into other languages	To encourage more international visitors, e.g. e.g. Russian, Chinese, Korean	Translation costs – quote for Chinese being sought	Town Trails are currently given out free to encourage exploration of the town. This is part of the TIC service.	Net cost	Currently offer French, German, Italian, Spanish and Japanese translations all done voluntarily by TIC contacts/friends	Better offer for visitors but at a cost.	This is in an investment rather than an income generator. International visitors may take a while to return regardless.
7	Bridge End Garden souvenir range with BEG branding	Use Nathan's photography skills to create a BEG pictorial booklet. Children's garden guide, or BEG themed starter gardener pack.	£££ Any product would be a BEG promotion. Could be a popular range	££ with possible sponsorship of booklet £££	££	Stock of BEG postcards and cards are currently available, plus a couple of artists' prints on occasion. Occasional sellers.	Better range – better use of BEG offer. But requires significant investment.	High – investment needed and demand not proven This could be a joint venture with a community group, such as Men's Sheds (CVSU)

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8	<p>Sell seasonal “grown not flown” flower bunches from cutting garden in BEG</p> <p>Also attractively bundled “heritage” produce</p>	<p>Use of BEG to generate income</p> <p>Brightens up TIC Environmentally sound</p>	<p>None other than display space.</p> <p>Staff time needed to gather/collect/bring items to point of sale.</p>	<p>£ or ££, possibly even £££</p>	<p>£ or ££</p>	<p>Freshness is essential</p> <p>If produce, compact bundles labelled with variety (string & tag) may sell</p>	<p>Profit: £ or ££</p>	<p>Low risk – trial on a small scale first? NB rhubarb has sold in past in compact “heritage bundles”</p> <p>Could also be sold directly from BEG using an honesty box</p>
9	<p>Work with Blue Badge Guides to offer pre-arranged guided tours of the town</p>	<p>Allows individuals to experience a guided tour of the town (currently only available to organised groups).</p>	<p>Blue Badge Guides work on £5 per head basis with a min. number per tour, so would want guaranteed minimum amount e.g. £50</p>	<p>£ for TIC (££ for Blue Badge Guides)</p>	<p>£</p>	<p>Risk will be if insufficient numbers book and minimum charge is not covered. Cancelling tours may be an option if min. number not met.</p>	<p>££ cost to generate same money back plus additional £ or ££</p>	<p>Medium – potential max. loss of £50 - starting with one or two tours, to see if this is viable. But most profit would go to Guides, not TIC, dependant on the commission charged by TIC. Could recognise a profit of say £20 per every group of 10</p>

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10	TIC market stall in front of TIC – at selected opportunities	TIC stock exposure outside where more passing trade will focus	Cost of staffing Cost of equipment, which TC may already have	££	£	This could even be an attractively decorated old bicycle parked outside on certain days	Little cost	Low – little cost, and on a good day, possible good sales – or pointing people to TIC (subject to resourcing). Not anticipated that this would be activated until social distancing is removed.
11	Laminating service	Adds to copying offer	Cost of a good laminator and pouches. Environmentally unfriendly.	£70	£	Service not currently available in TIC (and thought not to available in town)	Additional service - possible £ profit	Low – but would bring in small income only, especially after deduction of cost of equipment
12	Produce own books e.g. a children's book featuring Christmas in Saffron Walden	Could be popular gifts, incorporating promotion of Saffron Walden Seasonal product risky	Staff time Publishing cost Sponsorship a possibility	??	££	Usual process is to buy books as stock and sell on at a profit. NB. Dog book was different – was produced by TIC's RT & CG with sponsorship and donation.	Investment to create and publish and print books.	High – there is a cost in time and money to produce a book, although future incomes could be ringfenced for future expenditure

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13	Telephone sales of tickets	Additional commission	New arrangement would need to be negotiated with venues (principally Saffron Screen and Saffron Hall) Resourcing concerns re telephone sales at busy times	Possible potential ££ income from Saffron Screen sales (no current telephone booking arrangement is in place. Saffron Hall already has telephone booking arrangement although TIC could consider offering competitive quote?)	££ or perhaps £££ profit	There is currently no facility for booking Saffron Screen tickets by telephone, other than an office answerphone.	Possible profit?	Low, as all equipment is in place, but this would be a long-term commitment and would require a new agreement with Saffron Screen; discussions will be had imminently to ascertain if this can be progressed further. Saffron Hall already operates its own successful telephone system but further discussions to be initiated with Saffron Hall, subject to TIC resourcing and trial with Saffron Screen
14	Sale of advertising space	Tiered offer – to prioritise town events and businesses	Cost of additional display spaces, eg rotunda units Or could look to utilise Town Council street furniture (bus shelter, benches).	£	£ or low ££ profit if using existing units	Could ask BID for funding for units, but then BID businesses would expect free use and priority	Poster currently displayed FoC for SW events. TC premises benefit from the booking, and if the TIC is selling tickets, advertising the event leads to extra commission.	Low using existing display spaces High if new units purchased – money generated would not cover cost of units

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15	Sell alcohol-based souvenirs	Opportunity to sell high end products Saffron Gin Saffron Grange wines – IF supplier will oblige Could include small alcohol souvenir in gift baskets and this could tie in with market traders and/or the TIC could look to promote local retail sales (Adnams, Joseph Barnes etc)	Personal alcohol license needed - over £400 in costs to set up Purchase of stock – unless on sale or return	10%? Could be very popular Christmas gifts.	Possibly break even?	Alcohol products (even miniatures in gift baskets) cannot be sold at TIC without a licence.	Unknown	Medium to high – a high outlay and an untested demand. Further investigations required regarding licensing obligations.
16	Use own TIC images for calendar - possibly using Nathan's BEG pictures	- seasonal images already available	No cost	£££	£££	Only saving would be on images, i.e. £300 or so	The calendar generates ££££ profit but the only additional profit would be a saving on on the cost of the images (around £300pa)	Low for traditional views of town (a proven formula). Medium to high for BEG calendar – a new line, and unsold calendars cannot be carried into subsequent years.

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17	Explore new stock options -possibilities are: SW cross stitch kits, metal signs, aromatic saffron products	If popular – increase profit	£££ Stock purchase will be a cost.	£ ££ profit for successful items	£ to £££ If stock is not carried over into subsequent years, overall, this should be a profit.	TIC is given an annual budget to buy stock – BUT any profits are handed back to the Town Council and cannot be reinvested in stock	Hopefully overall a profit, assuming new stock is well chosen	Medium – could involve a loss if stock remains unsold within that year (ie deducted from profits within the P/L accounts)
18	Sell adverts on free literature eg: town centre maps or event materials	Increase in advertising revenue	Potentially £££	££ possibly £££	Profit £££		Selling adverts would mean large print runs quickly dated as adverts became irrelevant (retail changes etc) but note that if this is tied into a specific event, it has a limited shelf-life	Low

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19	Members only racked area	To encourage 'membership' i.e. joining up to TIC website	None if use existing racking	£ or ££	Should be a profit if can evidence an incentive to join up (or remain on board)	Members' promotional material is not currently given priority	£ or ££	Low – won't generate huge amounts of income but should be some – and encourages client loyalty
20	Targeted facebook posts	To promote saleable products	££ or £££ Anything from £20 upwards – the bigger the spend, the greater the promotion	?	Hopefully more sales, but difficult to attribute to FB post	Experience to date was targeted promotional posting during "Love Your Local Market fortnight" – to increase footfall in town, so hard to measure effect	? Hopefully increased profit	Medium – and related to outlay. Cost of ads may or may not be offset by related profits.
21	Enhance the crocus bulb offering - little trug containing crocus souvenirs as well as bulbs. Possibly add in trowel/gardening gloves/BEG tote bag etc. Even plant up some bulb pots as gifts.	Great gift purchase	Cost of additional items not already stocked, i.e. trugs, trowels, gloves	££	££	Bulbs sell well but there is scope for add on value here, creating a "gift basket"	Profit: ££	Low risk if using items which are already stocked. Risk gets higher if items are specially purchased and product remains unsold.

Additional projects:

1. A Christmas marketing campaign for our stock, targeting local residents. This could take the form of Facebook advertising and also advertising within the Walden Local.

Progress Update 1, August 2020:

Ref 1: An image for the 2020 Christmas card has been selected and is with the printer for formatting and printing.

Ref 2: An e-shop has been commissioned from Tela. Stock images and sales text for 50 items have been submitted and we are expecting the site to go 'live' in early September

Ref 3: This has been put on hold until we see how the bespoke e-shop works out. It may well follow as stage 2

Ref 6: Cambridge China Centre was approached for a translation of the Town Trail but has not responded. It is unlikely to do this without significant charge and since March there have been no Chinese visitors noted at the TIC in any case.

Ref 7: Contact has been made with the Saffron Walden Community Shed, who have just re-opened, and they are very keen to work with us on this project. Phil Clements has designed labelling and provided costings.

Ref 10: A market stall is not possible whilst social distancing remains a priority.

Ref 11: A laminator has been purchased and this service is now available to the public at £1 per lamination.

Ref 13: Ticket telephone sales have now been set up for Saffron Screen and went live on Wednesday 26th August.

Ref 15: The possibility of us selling alcohol-related souvenirs has been put to UDC in terms of what we need to do and we are currently awaiting their response.

Ref 16: The TIC calendar for 2021 uses Phil Clements' designs. It was chosen as it was "ready to go" and could be ordered on an "as needed basis" rather than the TIC needing to pre-order in bulk. Other possibilities for the calendar will be considered for 2022.

Ref 17: New stock lines are being explored. For example, we now sell face masks made by a local milliner. Also being investigated are Saffron Walden cross-stitch kits, and a supplier is currently working up a design. We hope that Phil Clements' designs may also be suitable for this project.