



**Windermere
& Bowness** | Chamber
of Trade

**Feedback Report on the proposed
Town Centre WiFi**

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Introduction

It came to the notice of the Secretary of the Windermere & Bowness Chamber of Trade that the Windermere Town Council had been approached by a consultant on behalf of South Lakeland District Council regarding Town Centre WiFi in Windermere & Bowness. The consultants are speaking to various parishes to establish if it would be of benefit to the locality and work through some of the practicalities of installation. The WiFi would be operated by a 3rd party, free of charge, provided there was a worthwhile business case, with a contract of exclusivity of up to 2 years. The Town and District Council would need to provide street furniture to mount equipment on (street lighting etc). Very small equipment. Free to install and to use. The third party makes profit out of advertising.

Methodology

The secretary of the Windermere & Bowness Chamber of Trade emailed the membership with the above information asking if they were in favour of the project, in principal by the 21st August 2015. The number of emails sent where 64.

The replies where returned via email.

Results

19% of the membership expressed an opinion as to the feasibility of the project.

There were no adverse comments.

The table below gives the comments made by those who replied and are in no particular order of preference.

I think the WiFi for the town is a excellent idea, and has our support
<p>I would like to express my concerns about the plans to offer free WIFI in Windermere and Bowness, as part of our £150,000 refurbishment to the Tourist Information Centre in Windermere we are and have been providing free WIFI at our own cost.</p> <p>The incentive of free WIFI has greatly increased our footfall in both the Tourist Information Centre and our café, The Hungry Goat. I feel that if SLDC were to offer free WIFI in Windermere we would struggle to attract as many tourists into the information centre which could in turn affect the local business that we recommend.</p> <p>In providing this service to both visitors and local businesses we have committed to a long term contract. As a non-funded service, we need to be cost effective and would feel like we have wasted a large investment and that would have a negative effect on both us and local businesses.</p>
This would not affect our property, a mile and a half south of Bowness on the Lyth Valley road. But for the benefit of tourists it has to be a good thing.
In principle we are in favour but we would need to know more details.
Thanks for the information we would definitely support this initiative
Yes, we support this initiative for free WiFi in Bowness.
Agree in principle
World of Beatrix Potter Attraction and Old Laundry Theatre are in support of the free town centre WIFI.
<p>I am sure free wi-fi is becoming the norm everywhere, including the path all the way up and on the top of Mount Fuji.</p> <p>Can't see it happening on Scafell though.</p> <p>The Asian market, especially like to be able to upload their experiences instantly, and that's vital for tourism, because Google loves it. Bowness will benefit.</p> <p>The one caveat I would have is about the advertising. Just because it's free would you want, for example, massage parlours on there? Or ads for the Cotswolds? What control will you have regarding a family advertising approach?</p> <p>I have from time to time over my career had free maps to give to guests from advertisers who get it paid for by selling the advertising to local businesses.</p>

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It usually ends in grief. The advertiser's miss-sell. The maps are rubbish despite much communication about what we want. So I would ask the "buyers" to be very careful about the specification of what the advertising is and how long? How it positions itself on the viewers device.

Also, what guarantees are there regarding the speed? Slow is worse than no WiFi. It costs good money to have good speed.

My personal initial thoughts are yes, it sounds like a great idea, bringing us up to the 21st Century like many other places, I heard recently that Mount Fuji in Japan now has 5 WiFi hotspots on it. Visitors had complained that they couldn't upload their photos onto social media quick enough, so Japan responded immediately.

The only thing that could turn people against it could be café owners who may find that people park themselves in a corner with 1 cup of coffee and stay there for 2 hours.

Should be good hope we get it A S A P

Is the system going to monitor the whereabouts of the users?

What safeguards are there going to be in place to keep personal data private?

Is it going to be used as a means of 'tracking' spending habits?

The Windermere WiFi sounds like a very good idea, I recently noticed that we now have 4g from EE and 3. Wonder how long it will be until Vodafone catches up.

I think the town centre WiFi will be a great help to many of our visitors, they often arrive and need to use WiFi to make hotel bookings and this would be a great advantage too them. The 4g is still patchy in the area (at best), so as far as we are concerned it's a great idea, would probably want to advertise the restaurant too!

Conclusions

The responses from the membership indicate that there is good support for this initiative.

It should not be inferred that those who did not respond are against the project.

The Chamber of Trade would hope that they will be kept up to date with the progress being made and would wish to be involved should the project go ahead.

Report prepared by

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