

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

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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.	A success – 2020 card using TIC Market Square at Night image was popular and sold out. (NB. Xmas card profit does not reflect this as old cards from previous years were sold at or below cost to clear). 2021 Christmas card is already being decided upon based on aerial views of Saffron Walden in the snow taken by Paul Bellany from his drone.	Profit on this year’s Christmas Card sales is £300.22
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?	Successfully set up. E-shop was commissioned from Tela. Site was live with 50 + items in time for lockdown 2.	As of 5 th January, the overall figures, based on an average profit calculation of one third of net income, are: Profit of £896.80 on e-shop sales to date. Year 1 costs: £2200.00

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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?	Not explored further as E-shop plus Click It Local already requiring substantial time input. Now hold - kept as a possibility for another stage.	N/A
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.	Postponed due to COVID	
5	Town Hall tours	Better use of Town Hall	Training? Staff member needed	£ (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.	Postponed due to COVID	
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.	No response from China Centre. No foreign visitors at present due to COVID. Certainly none from China in recent months. Postponed.	

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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 (NB I would argue that with most souvenirs/gifts, you create the demand by selecting the right stock = positive risk. RT)	Trowel & seed sets and Fairy Doors now in stock. 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. 'When Santa Got Stuck In The Hedge Maze': children's festive story/personalised letter was very well received.	Trowel/Seed Sets: 4 sold to date. Profit £13.11 Fairy Doors: 11 sold to date Profit: £27.37
8	Sell seasonal "grown not flown" flower bunches from cutting garden in BEG Also attractively bundled "heritage" produce	Use of BEG to generate income Brightens up TIC Environmentally sound	None other than display space. Staff time needed to gather/collect/bring items to point of sale.	£ or ££, possibly even £££	£ or ££	Freshness is essential If produce, compact bundles labelled with variety (string & tag) may sell	Profit: £ or ££	Low risk – trial on a small scale first? NB rhubarb has sold in past in compact "heritage bundles" Could also be sold directly from BEG using an honesty box MUST have appropriate sales space if we do this; it does not sit well alongside general items; investigate greengrocer unit for pavement display?	Not been possible during autumn/winter season. No excess produce in any case. No extra seeds available either.	
9	Work with Blue Badge Guides to offer pre-arranged guided tours of the town	Allows individuals to experience a guided tour of the town (currently only available to organised groups).	Blue Badge Guides work on £5 per head basis with a min. number per tour, so would want guaranteed minimum amount e.g. £50	£ for TIC (££ for Blue Badge Guides)	£	Risk will be if insufficient numbers book and minimum charge is not covered. Cancelling tours may be an option if min. number not met.	££ cost to generate same money back plus additional £ or ££	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	Postponed due to COVID	

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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.	Postponed due to COVID. Priority at present has to be social distancing.	
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	In place. Low level take up, but a useful service. £1.50 per lamination	Net Takings to Date: £26.83
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	Santa story produced at Christmas.	16 sold. Profit £19.20
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	Now in place for Saffron Screen, since 26 th August.	Very low impact due to the closure of Saffron Screen and people not buying tickets/tokens. When things return to normal, this will improve. Ticket and Token Commission from Saffron Screen since 1 st November is £23.00 net

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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	No investment yet in rotundas etc.	
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.	Licencing issue remains an obstacle. 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. TF tells us that we are not covered by the Town Hall licence. A licence for the TIC would cost iro £70 p/a. This would be covered by eg 2 bottles sold on the strength of a window display by Saffron Grange.	
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.	Not considered for 2021 as small batches of a designer calendar were ordered to avoid over ordering. Designer was Phil Clements. 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. The aim is to have the calendar design signed off very early so that discussions on this key item do not happen in high season as they usually do.	Profit on 2021 calendar is £1518.97 based on 524 sales. 2020 Calendar profit was £1850.77, based on 715 sales at a lower price (£6.00 compared to £7.50). Paul Bellany has offered to produce a ‘Saffron Walden from the Air’ Calendar for 2022 and this looks very interesting indeed.

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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)	New stock lines are being explored. Cross stitch sets ordered in, also face masks made by a local milliner. Phil Clements' designs may also be suitable for new stock lines. Cross stitch kits for crocus book marks have sold very well in the run-up to Christmas.	
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	High current risk (pandemic impact) of businesses going into liquidation after they have taken out an advert.	No opportunity to do this yet.	
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	Postponed due to COVID	
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.	A few done.	£25 spent to increase the number of subscribers to our e-newsletter which was very effective and added around 70 people to our list. £30 spent to advertise our Christmas Hampers. 1 online purchase and 3 via the shop

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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.	To be considered in summer 2021. Also to order crocus bulbs earlier for more sales.	Crocus Bulb Sales Profit in 2020: £653.17

Additional Ideas for Development: November, December 2020 and into January 2021

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22	Christmas marketing campaign with the Walden Local	TIC in terms of sales of hampers, calendars, Christmas puddings, Christmas cards, Mystery bags.	£512 + VAT for coverage, editorial and adverts in 6 editions starting from the 4 th November.	Income on these products since the 4 th November when the Walden Local campaign started is £		Social media advertising will happen too, but not all sign up to this. A weekly feature in the Local until mid-December will increase sales		Medium. Cost is quite high, but we need to speculate to accumulate.	7 adverts ran over a continuous 7 week period	Net cost of advertising was £592.00. Christmas sales profit in December 2020 £3744.48
23	UDC now have a tourism function. We are looking at ways to work with them using our website and charging them accordingly	Annual payment to the TIC to host and maintain district- wide information.	No extra financial cost from Tela, so it's staff time to be considered	£4640 per annum, based on UDC paying the full maintenance cost to Tela (£1000) plus 2 hours a week TIC staff time at £35 per hour	£4640 per annum	Tela currently charge us £1000 per annum for the maintenance of our site. Adding a few more pages should not make any difference to this cost	The income shown in column 5	No risk, just staff time to manage and maintain.	Awaiting a response from UDC. Sarah Lewin chased up on 4 th January.	

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24	Online ticket selling via our e-shop	Increased ticket sales for the TIC, meaning increased commission. It also provides an online platform for those productions that don't have one	Basic selling on existing site is free. Buying in a ticketing plug-in to allow selling with seating plans would be £1000 to £2500 depending on the length of time Tela need to integrate it.	Unknown without trying, but potentially significant.	Unknown at this stage	As per column 4	£1000 to £2500 cost	Would promoters like Andy White, SWMTC and the Panto use our offer when they have their own online facility? The answer depends on how much we charge them and whether it is a better deal than they already have.	Yes, this is possible to set up by purchasing a 'plug-in' piece of software to allow sales of tickets online	Cost £1000 to £2500.00 dependent on the time spent by Tela
25	Explore new lines with successful suppliers eg Mill House Millinery – could Saffron Crocus hat designs and or buttonholes be made?	Wider range. Proven that high-end individually made/bespoke items do sell.	Low if negotiate sale or return	££ to ££		N/A		Low unless TIC buys up front – even so, the items will probably sell fairly quickly		
26	(COVID permitting) Organise author talks in the Town Hall for titles that we stock, sell tickets and sell the books.	Community benefit – events up and running again in Town Hall. Benefit to TIC in ticket sales and book sales. Double winner.	If Town Hall is not booked and no charge is made to TIC, little or no cost other than staff time. These could even be daytime events.	££		N/A		Low. (NB. Possible risk of upsetting existing independent bookshop.)		
27	Commission a sweet manufacturer to produce saffron sweets (boiled type, i.e. long shelf life) - or – learning from Xmas pud experience – simply arrange stickers to decorate standard sweets and biscuits	Likely to be popular gifts, extending the saffron range - standard non-saffron but branded SW foods would sell if priced reasonably	££ - saffron is expensive - much more affordable option	Small profit - medium profit		N/A - N/A		Medium – some outlay for low profit margin item. - less risk for standard non-saffron but still SW branded offers (there was no saffron in the successful Xmas puds)		
28	Saffron Walden (crocus) picnic rugs and other outdoor socialising kit for the new normal	Increased range of items that people may need	Could be expensive	££		N/A		Medium. Outlay quite high, items quite bulky. But could be popular...?		

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29	Hampers: various types eg Saffron Walden souvenirs, Saffron Walden/local produce, crocus themed vintage china tea/coffee/biscuit hampers (under the 'TIC Vintage' brand), hampers for dog owners	Encouraging the idea of the TIC as a one-stop-shop for all gift needs. Raising our profile as supporters of local artisan food producers. Linking to the large population of dog-owners in the area. Demonstrating our knowledge of current trend in appreciation of all things vintage. Giving the customer the option to 'build' their own gift hamper.	Currently have a stock of wicker and cardboard hampers and packaging items left over from Christmas. The cost of these would be passed onto the customer.	££				Low risk. Most of the proposed stock is already here. By identifying a customer's budget, we can create them a bespoke hamper so that they get exactly what they want and we cover our costs and make a profit.	This is something we will start to market almost immediately.	
30.	Vintage china with a crocus theme	Customer perception of a service in touch with current trends and imaginative enough to pursue them. Possibility of finding batches of items very cheaply on line and adding value by splitting and remarketing the individual items. Easy to tie in with #vintage trends on social media platforms. Has already proven to bring new customers into the shop.	Cost of initial purchase.	Various but mark-up is significant once batches have been split and marketed separately eg a vintage Hornsea Saffronware butter dish was purchased for £15 and sold for £40.	££	£		A change in the trends away from interest in vintage items; this is the responsibility of the buyer to monitor.	2 sample vintage china hampers were compiled for Christmas and sold for £80 and £50 respectively. More 1950s Figgjo Flint Crocusware has been purchased very cheaply online and will be divided up to form 3 'vintage lockdown comfort hampers' to include 2 cups and saucers, a packet of cafetiere coffee from the market and handmade biscuits from a local artisan baker.	

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31.	Pargetting range	<p>To introduce another unusual element to our souvenir range focussing on this striking Saffron Walden architectural feature.</p> <p>To create a piggy-back marketing link with Saffron Walden Museum; they have in their collection items that we could have copied and used in souvenirs (to be discussed with curator). We have many highly coloured gifts and souvenirs but very little that would sit comfortably in a more minimalist home.</p>	Not yet known.	Not yet known.				The same risk as any new range; the greater risk is in not keeping our stock lines fresh and innovative.	The initial thought is to copy or find a mould for the crocus pattern on several buildings as well as somehow get a relief mould of main image from the Old Sun Inn. From these moulds, fridge magnets, paperweights and decorative tiles could be made. Research ongoing.	Unknown but with high-profile launch and social media marketing, am confident of strong sales.
32.	Crocus themed table linen	<p>To increase our range of higher end gifts.</p> <p>To extend range in a direction it has not yet taken.</p> <p>To demonstrate to the public the worth of repeat shopping trips to the TIC.</p> <p>To maintain an identity of being imaginative and forward-thinking.</p> <p>To continue to make the</p>	Unknown; research on-going.	As previous.				As previous, the same risk as any new range; the greater risk is in not keeping our stock lines fresh, innovative and tempting.	We now have a seamstress linked to the TIC who was commissioned to make our bespoke dog bandanas for Christmas. The aim would be to either source crocus patterned linen or to have some printed. Potentially, this could be an extension of the pargetting range using an elegant pargetted crocus motif. Would be looking at table cloths and napkins.	

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		<p>distinction between souvenir items and gift items and their potentially different markets.</p> <p>Also, as previous, introducing a range of gifts in more muted tones.</p>								