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# Clacton Airshow Review 2023

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# Clacton Airshow Event Review 2023

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Following a request made as part of the Council’s Budget Setting process for 2023/24 to undertake a review of the Clacton Airshow, Cabinet are asked to note the content of this report and determine which of the options set out in section 6 to select for future operation.

### ***Appendix***

Appendix B 2022 Economic Impact Evaluation Report prepared by Destination Research Limited

## 1.0 Purpose

To provide a current economic and social impact report on the 2023 Clacton Airshow.

## 2.0 Why Does Tendring District Council stage the Airshow?

<b>Business Need</b>	<p>The event has a clear-evidenced impact on local tourism, and subsequently to the local economy, attracting thousands of visitors to the District. The 2022 Economic Impact Evaluation Report prepared by Destination Research Limited estimated that the 2022 Clacton Airshow contributed a net value of approximately £12,155,000 net income to the area with 166 jobs sustained (approximates due to the PRIME method of data collection). See <i>Appendix B – Economic Impact Evaluation report 2022</i>.</p> <p>The recent Corporate Plan Consultation (2023) found that <b>The air show is greatly loved by residents in the area</b> with 15.9% of people responding positively stating they would volunteer at the Clacton Airshow.</p>
<b>Key Objectives Corporate plan (Our Vision) 2024 - 2028</b>	<p>The Clacton Airshow plays a key role in the District’s growing Tourism industry; it attracts local, regional, national visitors. It supports the newly adopted Corporate Plan (Our Vision) 2024-2028 current key objectives by:</p> <p><b><i>Supporting pride in our area and services to residents</i></b> – encouraging local communities to be a part of the Clacton Airshow, by promoting volunteering opportunities and working with local businesses to support a sustainable event. To ensure that the event is run and managed with a focus on ensuring cleanliness and personal accountability for the local environment for the duration of the Airshow.</p> <p><b><i>Promoting our heritage offer, attracting visitors and encouraging them to stay longer</i></b> – the Clacton Airshow attracts visitors from within Tendring and further afield. It is listed as a key theme and outcome.</p> <p>Events are a key component of the Council’s Tourism Strategy and as one of the largest events in Essex, the Clacton Airshow contributes large numbers to the local and regional visitor economy.</p>



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### 3.0 Background

The 2023 Clacton Airshow saw one of the largest flight display offerings across England, with 20 flying displays on day 1 and 18 displays on day 2, a back-to-back display. Taking place over Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> August and Friday 25<sup>th</sup> August 2023, the two-day event was organized successfully and ran with minimal issues. The Clacton Airshow is Tendring's largest free event and is well supported by external partners including; Essex Police, Counter Terrorism, East of England Ambulance Service, Essex Fire Service, Coastguard, and RNLI.

There was a good mixture in the flying display including the RAF display teams, aerobatic aircraft, and historic aircraft. On the ground there were exhibits, children's activities and various entertainment areas along the seafront. A wide range of trade stands and food courts were available. After the displays, many of the local retailers opted to stay open late to provide a further tourist offer.

Listening to feedback from retailers on the high street, the Creative and Cultural team alongside Economic Growth and Regeneration colleagues piloted a High Street Airshow Trail with the main aim to increase footfall from the seafront to the High Street.

Weather on day 1 was unfavorable and this caused some logistical/practical issues and attendance was marginally lower as a result. However, a sunny day 2 encouraged the crowds to attend and subsequently the Airshow was hugely well supported. Despite a slower start to the event, an estimated 250,000 visitors joined in the celebrations. Despite the rain on day 1, it was impressive to view the crowds building and families setting up stations for the day under rain covers.

A final sign off on progressing the 2023 Clacton Airshow was delayed due to the Local Elections in Tendring, which did cause logistical issues, however the Operational Tourism team were able to ensure that the event remained well planned and that visitors remained unaware of delays. The impact of this delay meant that there was less of an opportunity for economies of scale and cost savings.

To plan a successful event of this scale, a debrief occurs soon after the Airshow with all the key stakeholders in attendance including TDC Events Team, TDC Specialists, Emergency Services and key partners. In the six months leading up to the event, a monthly meeting was held with all key stakeholders to ensure that event organisation, emergency planning and coordination of all key agencies occurs. This is a multi-agency approach to an in-depth and complex operation.

The 2023 Clacton Airshow debrief was held in October 2023, it enabled all key stakeholders to meet and discuss items that went well and challenges faced. A positive meeting enables the Clacton Airshow Event Management Plan to remain a living document.

This report assesses the impact of the event against the key objectives, and provides a current financial position with options for future Airshows explored.

## 4.0 Impact

### 4.1 Economic Impact – Finance 2023

The 2022 Economic Impact Evaluation Report prepared by Destination Research Limited using nationally recognized modelling data estimated that the 2022 Clacton Air Show contributed a net value of approximately £12,155,000 net income to the area with 166 jobs sustained (approximates due to the PRIME method of data collection).

The subsidy to run the Airshow is increasing and the largest costs to run the event remain the flights/aircraft and also the infrastructure of the security and Anti-Terrorism requirements. These two key areas have seen significant year on year increases. The direct costs and income for running the Air Show in 2023 were:

	AMOUNT (£)
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>	192,272.00
<b>INCOME</b>	65,718.00
<b>SUBSIDY</b>	126,554.00

The budgeted subsidy was £130,330, this included the additional £60,000 allocated to the Clacton Airshow through the cost pressure process. There are further costs incurred by the Council to support the Airshow both in the lead up to, and during the event. These costs are typically associated with the additional support required to run an event of this scale and include resource support from Engineering and other support services. Whilst there are proposals to decrease expenses and increase income as set out in this report, it is felt that the original £60,000 cost pressure should be maintained over the next three years to ensure sufficient budget is in place to continue to successfully manage this event. The Operational Tourism team were able to successfully negotiate £9,500 in sponsorship, generate £15,703 in programme sales, £2,190 donations through bucket collections and £38,326 from exhibitors/trade. The slightly lower programme sales than last year, were contrasted by an increase in bucket donation/collections and trade stand income. This was a nationally replicated experience across other air shows.

For trade/exhibitors, it was apparent that confidence was beginning to return post COVID-19 with a return to full booking for trade stands. However, in the weeks leading up to the air show we experienced stalls dropping out due to personal poor performance and increasing costs associated with travel, a lesson learned will be that in future years a retaining deposit will be charged.



For cash bucket donations there is a continuing change in public approach to carrying money, this continues to result in less donations made via the traditional bucket method. Working alongside the Princes Theatre Box Office system, the team were able to trial pre-order souvenir programmes and enabling an online method of donation. This proved popular and will be offered in a timely fashion and with greater publicity for future years.

**Current methods utilised resulting in reduction in costs and in-kind cost savings include:**

- A review of fees and charges for events undertaken, this will further raise income generation opportunities going forward
- Outsourcing the Hospitality area which includes: staff, event team and partner lunches
- BBC Essex advertising
- Production of programme and advertising
- Park and Ride
- Accommodation
- Exploring use of volunteers

In addition, other income generating sources are being evaluated including the acceptance of card payments for both programmes and bucket collections in the future. It is also important to mention that additional income is generated through car-parking, for 2023 the car parks in and around Clacton raised an additional £3,300 compared to the same period the week prior.

Every line of expenditure will continue to be evaluated to ensure that only essential costs are accrued. It is a positive position to have the decision to continue to run the Clacton Airshow in 2024, this will enable to team to maximize on cost efficiencies and income generation. It would be a positive step, if the decision was taken to run the Clacton Airshow for three years as this would enable to team to generate economies of scale when exploring sponsorship, contracting of key services (Security and First Aid), and other income generation initiatives.

**4.2 Social impact**

The recent Corporate Plan Consultation (2023) highlighted the Clacton Airshow as an event that local residents are proud of with the air show ‘loved’ by people in the area. In the build up and throughout the duration of the event there is an air of excitement and energy. Furthermore , a recent report ‘Levelling up in Practice: Clacton Research summary Report’ (2022) highlighted areas that people were proud of, in focus groups participants mentioned the Airshow as something that makes Clacton stand out. Engagement in social media posts in the build up to, during and post Air Show is increasing yearly. Tendring District Council’s Tourism team utilise social media to effectively showcase the event and to support the logistical communication during the event.

Twitter	Facebook	Instagram	Website
@ClactonAirshow	Essex Sunshine Coast	@essexsunshinecoast	<a href="http://www.clactonairshow.com">www.clactonairshow.com</a>
@Tendring_DC	Tendring District Council	@tendringdistrictcouncil	<a href="http://www.essex-sunshine-coast.com">www.essex-sunshine-coast.com</a>
			<a href="http://www.tendringdc.gov.uk">www.tendringdc.gov.uk</a>

On the [www.essex.police.uk](http://www.essex.police.uk) website Essex Police reported 1 arrest and 11 children separated from their parents but reunited within minutes of being separated.

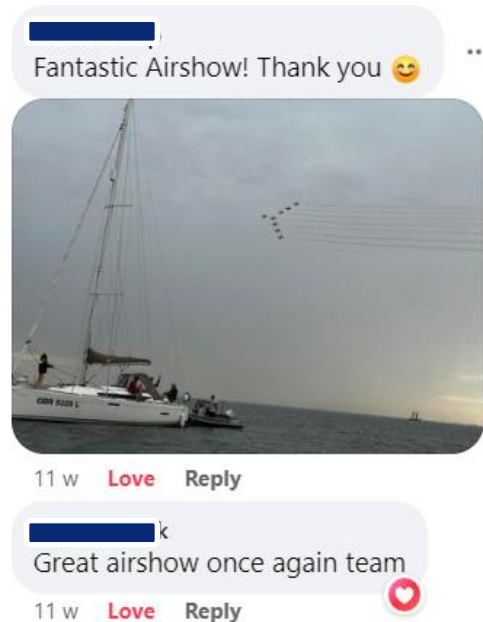
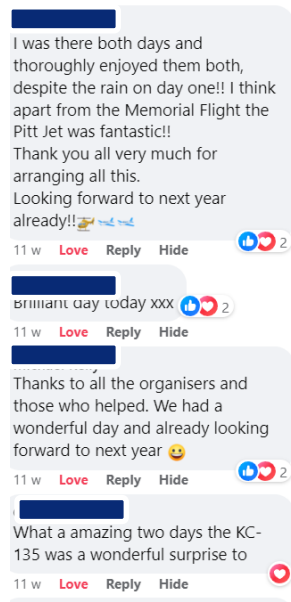
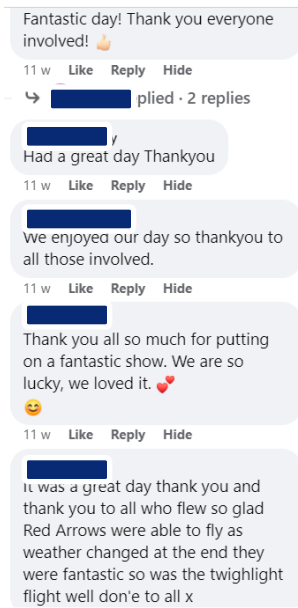
Clacton Community Policing Team Inspector Aaron Homatopoulos commented on the Essex Police Facebook page @EssexPoliceUK that the 2023 air show was celebrated by crowds 'safely and peacefully'

*"There's been a great atmosphere around Clacton over the two days of the air show as everyone came here to watch the flying displays and have a good time. It was a fabulous way to celebrate 30 years"*

Inspector Homatopoulos further referenced the successful multi-agency approach:

*"A lot of planning with event organiser's Tendring District Council, the Royal Air Force, Essex County Fire and Rescue Service, St Johns Ambulance, the East of England Ambulance Service and other partners ensured the Air Show was a very safe event."*

This year highlighted the growing importance on social media as a communications channel. Feedback from attendees was largely positive:



Brilliant show!



11 w Like Reply

A amazing airshow as usual thank you to all involved for putting this on. Just a few ideas for next year after seeing the KC135 fly through which was great to see it's a shame more aircraft can't be arranged from local bases aswell. I know a lot is down to cost which I understand.. but maybe a F15,F35 from RAF lakenheath or a f35 from marham. Also thought that the typhoon was meant to be there I'm sure I saw a report about it being at Clacton this year . All in all Clacton ISA great show

11 w Love Reply



### With some areas for improvement:

I saw both the Vampire and Strikemaster pair last year and they were rubbish so I looked round during there displays so far nothing decent performing except the BBMF and the Red Arrows as the Chinook Display Team and the Typhoon Display Team aren't coming so at the moment i'm not coming unless some decent is added to the display schedule.

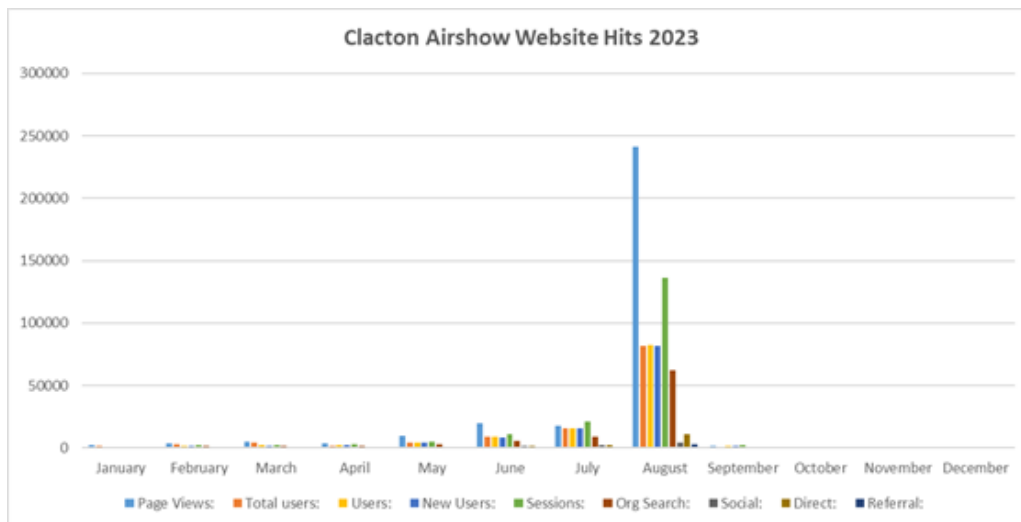
16 w Like Reply

Come on **Clacton Airshow (Official)** this is the biggest event of the season and it's your 30th anniversary and we still have no typhoons even for one day but would be nice to see them both days please make this happen

15 w Like Reply



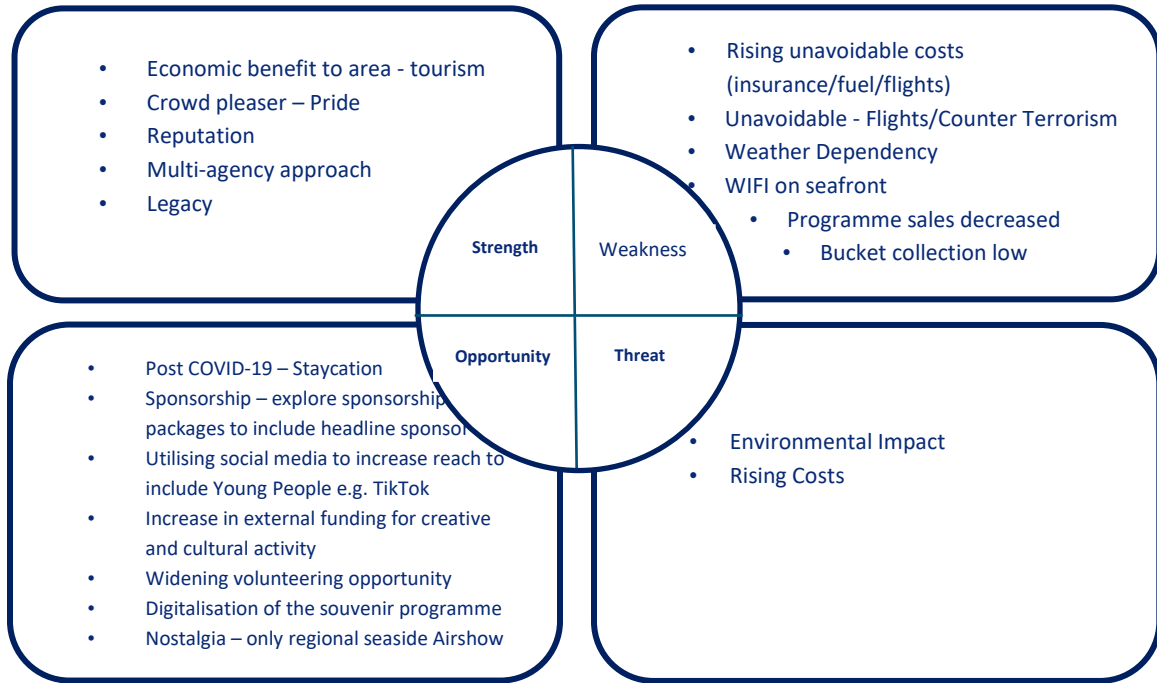
During the Airshow, visits to the Essex Sunshine Coast website jumped significantly, with page views jumping to just under 250,000 in August:





For 2023, the event was well supported by local and regional news, BBC Essex located a presenting team and their mobile TV unit on site for the duration of the show, with regular live updates and live broadcast from site. Coverage of the Clacton Airshow was seen on regional BBC and ITV channels, radio coverage also occurred via BBC Essex. Live travel updates and a live feed of the flights.

### 5.0 Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats Analysis



### 6.0 2024 and beyond

The following options have been included for full consideration:



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## 7.0 Key Summary

The early decision taken to run the Clacton Airshow in 2024, will enable the event to benefit from early planning opportunities. Officers feel that there are other income generation opportunities that could benefit the Airshow should a decision be taken to commit to it for a three year duration. Consideration will need to be given to the cost of staging the event against the key outcomes including the impact on the local community. If there is a three-year commitment to the Airshow, the following income generating opportunities will be explored:

1. Sponsorship – if there is a longer-term commitment to the Airshow, this will provide an opportunity to work with a specialist organisation to procure additional sponsors over a three-year period. This could include a headline sponsor and other organisations with a range of packages, to supplement those which the team secured in 2023.
2. Clacton Airshow Merchandise – if Cabinet agree to a three year commitment to the Airshow, this will open up opportunities to procure merchandise in bulk. This will open up opportunities to buy sales items at low prices and increase margins and profitability if price points are appropriately pitched. If the decision is to agree running the Airshow on a year by year basis, items would be bought in lower quantities to lower the risk of losing money, if sales were weak. This would increase the buy in price and lower the projected margins.
3. Longer term procurement – all the procured Airshow services could be agreed over a longer period of time, which has the potential to lower the price paid. This would need to be considered within procurement rules and consideration would need to be given to agreements, so poor service levels could be addressed.

All of the above opportunities have the potential to reduce the Airshow subsidy, but until further work is undertaken, there are no projected figures available at this time. It is important to highlight that if Cabinet is minded to consider a commitment to a three-year event, funding of up to £180k would need to be identified, this could put pressure of the long term forecast which may require consideration of savings elsewhere in the budget to be identified to accommodate this additional cost.

## 8.0 Recommendation

Following a request made as part of the Council's Budget Setting process for 2023/24 to undertake a review of the Clacton Airshow, Cabinet are asked to note the content of this report and determine which of the options set out in section 6 to select for future operation.

## 9.0 Dates for the diary

**Thursday 22nd and Friday 23rd August 2024**