

**Report to:** Events and Town Centre  
Management Committee



**Report Ref:** E1905  
**Meeting Date:** 30<sup>th</sup> September 2019  
**Agenda Item:** 6  
**Prepared By:** Town Centre Manager

**Subject:** Town Centre Manager's Report

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**1.1 BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT**

A detailed email was sent to all town centre businesses in early June. The email contained detailed overview of BIDS including a link to last year's presentation. At the end of the email the businesses were asked to vote YES or NO whether they wished for the Knutsford Town Council to progress the BID to feasibility study. The Town Centre Manager is still canvassing for more businesses to vote as only 46 have voted so far.

In addition, the Town Centre Manager is building up a database of landlords.

**1.2 GB HIGH STREET OF THE YEAR**

The Town Centre Manager led Knutsford's first entry to the above competition. In addition, to the 850 word entry, a collection of photographs and existing video were compiled and a new video was produced with the kind help of Jonathan Farber, Rachel Bishop and Forum of Private Businesses. This video can be viewed on Knutsford Town Council's YouTube channel.

Although Knutsford was not shortlisted it was a good exercise and helped identify areas where the town is weak compared to those shortlisted towns. Appendix 1 details further the profiles of the shortlisted towns.

**1.3 BENCHMARKING/BUSINESS CONFIDENCE**

June's small Benchmarking programme had to be halted due to lack of volunteers. Previous programmes have also suffered from a lack of volunteers leading to incomplete data collection.

It is recommended that budget is provided in 2020 to fund 48 hours of resource to undertake a benchmarking programme which will include the collection of:

- Visitor Origin
- Town User Centre Survey
- Footfall Count
- Car park counts

This would be two people working six-hour days for four days, two in June and two in July.

The business confidence survey results will be available in for the next meeting

### **1.3 TASTE KNUTSFORD**

The following tours have been held since the last report:

June 15 <sup>th</sup>	12
July 6 <sup>th</sup>	15
July 13 <sup>th</sup>	10
September 6 <sup>t</sup>	7
September 7 <sup>th</sup>	10

There has been an increase in future bookings particularly for private tours.

A Taste Knutsford version of the town centre visitors map has been sponsored by Richard Milkins of Marketing Cheshire/Cheshire East of Cheshire East is in production and will be going to print within a couple of weeks. This will be distributed to the usual channels and via Gateway Cheshire. This will coincide with the tour's one-year anniversary.

New recruits to the tour are Project 53, and the new management of The Old Session House are happy to continue. The Freemasons have declined as they are no longer doing a food offer per se.

### **1.4 PUMPKIN PATH**

Plans are well underway for the above. Lead sponsors are Savills and Mere Day Nursery. Swizzels Matlow are providing sweets to be given out at the end of the path. Buddha Group and Bella Marketing and Design are providing sponsorship in kind through reduced fees.

Knutsford Beats and Fuchsia School of Dancing will be providing the entertainment along with Collective Entertainment Bureau and Demon Events providing scary characters and props for King Street and Wallwood. Knutsford Market Hall will also stay open during the evening.

### **1.5 60 KING STREET & THE EDIT BUILDING CANUTE PLACE**

The Town Centre Manager has overseen several displays in the above premises. 60 King Street has proved particularly popular with the fashion retailers with many reporting that the displays have generate footfall to their stores and additional sales.

The Town Centre Manager is actively pursuing the landlords of other vacant properties to obtain permission for their premises to be used in a similar way to minimise the impact of empty windows.

### **1.6 DEMENTIA FRIENDLY TOWN**

PCSO Pountain has re-started this training which is offered to local businesses to help raise awareness of dementia and how businesses can be more dementia friendly in their daily interaction.

### **1.7 SOCIAL MEDIA TRAINING**

At the time of writing the above workshop was planned to be held at the Forum of Private Businesses, run by Rachel Bishop of Aunty Social and facilitated by The Town Centre Manager on Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> September.

## APPENDIX 1 GB HIGH STREET OF THE YEAR 2019 FINALISTS

### Rising Star

#### **Wellington Telford**

Former bank used as community hub with cinema, café and arts venue

Empty Shop Grant Scheme in place giving £60k

Mural Trail

Planting scheme by volunteers at local station

Free tai chi in the park

Business engagement initiatives to improve online presence

Peace Garden

Litter picking by volunteers

Future 'Love Wellington' app

Community signage in place

#### **Daventry, Northants**

Building town as a 'Festival Town' - Food, Motorcycle, Cycle Tour.

Active business association

Treasure Hunts

Homeless support programme

Free refill water scheme

Hanging baskets

Nappies and Natter scheme

Electric Car Charging points

Large cycle path network

New cinema complex in town centre

#### **Northwich**

Visual Arts Cheshire Trail hosting local artists work

Makaton Friendly programme with Downs Support Group

Social media videos featuring retailers

Wildflower gardens in town centre

Community litter picking

Cafes providing gallery spaces

Knitting classes in woolshop

Barbers creating own home brew

Next 12 month focus on town centre accessibility + providing volunteer town hosts scheme

Business Improvement District

#### **Willesden Green**

Local residents review scheme where locals review businesses with improvement suggestions

Supported by Fed of Small Business

Launching Shop Local scheme with offers and events

Lights switch on.

Tree planting project.

Public arts mural project  
Working with landlords to use vacant shops as gallery spaces

### **Colchester**

Thursday Night Lanes - late night shopping event  
Street entertainment and live music  
Clustering of special offers within areas to support neighbours  
Open community gatherings  
Community tidy up programme  
Ensuring areas are wheelchair friendly  
Future plastic bag free pledge  
Launching 'hyper local' crypto currency  
Working with council to use empty units

### **Rochdale**

Revival of historic town centre area with new housing and building maintenance  
Start up grants / discounts for new businesses has created 30 new businesses  
National museum coming next year  
Mural festival planned  
Air benches covered in ivy to help air quality  
Large retail development planned next year  
Virtual Rochdale initiative launched to showcase town and attractions to visitors

### **Barrow in Furness**

Grants to encourage community groups to hold town centre events  
Christmas carol competition for schools  
Running festival  
Festival of Transport  
Super Soapbox Challenge with celebrities  
£100,000 set aside to enhance local market, create green space and install electricity points  
New local website planned, visitor leaflet and social media campaign  
Business Improvement District

### **Yarm High Street**

Town Centre Events - Summer Fashion Event  
Easter competition with prizes  
New Heritage signs  
Use My Loo campaign  
Free dementia training for businesses  
Local residents produced 'Knitted Bags for Life'  
Local litter picking and weed pulls  
£500,000 council high street infrastructure improvements  
Floating cycle route  
Illuminated river walks  
Charging points for vehicles

### **Tankerton Whitstable**

Talk of Tankerton free community events  
Easter trail and christmas Santa cruise delivery food for foodbanks.  
Circus Fair and other events  
High street planters to encourage bees  
New town map drawn by local resident

### **Ashby de la Zouche**

Programme to connect residents to visitors  
New brand logo for town  
Town Ambassadors programme  
New shop front signage  
New digital presence  
Upgrading street furniture  
Ban the Plastic Bag scheme  
Promoting green tourism  
Big Litter Pickup with 150+ volunteers  
Future local apps and loyalty programme  
Four electric charging points in town centre

### **Aberfoyle**

Launch Only in Aberfoyle programme  
Cross selling by retailers encouraged to support each other  
Disabled access  
Free town centre wifi  
Business hub with co working spaces  
Litter pickup  
Easter egg hunts  
Plans for improved town seating, recycling bins, play parks  
Host training being planned.

### **Gourock**

Enjoyed huge investment (by CC?)  
Regeneration forum created  
Annual garden party  
WW1 Commemorations  
Refurbished outdoor swimming pool  
Town hall refurbished  
Heritage Group uses town hall for events and exhibitions  
Town rebranding with new strapline and social media engagement  
Council and volunteers litter picking  
Using wider footpaths more  
Encouraging street cafes

### **Falkirk High Street**

Social Saturday discount scheme

Town heritage events e.g. exhibitions, school projects.  
Artist in residence programme  
Bringing green spaces into the town centre in collaboration with volunteers and schools  
Town centre wifi planned  
Active Travel hub with workshops, maintenance, e-bike hire.

### **Lanark High Street**

Annual Festival and Celebrations Lanark Lanimers  
Flower festival and Christmas Market  
Late Night shopping event  
Digital developments - touch screen in town centre promoting events  
Hanging baskets provided and maintained by charity.  
Regular litter picking  
Murals on building in disrepair

### **Cowdenbeath**

Digital buddies for shop keepers with local schools  
Work experience schemes  
Augmented reality mining mural planned  
Use of bloggers and influencers to talk about town  
Investments in connectivity for cyclists and walkers  
Enhanced green spaces  
Urban artworks  
Working towards being dementia friendly town.

### **Castle Douglas**

Meet the Street to introduce business owners to people  
Shops and restaurants encouraged to create workshops  
Creators encouraged to show how things made  
Ladies Day planned with hairdressers , beauticians and clothes shops  
Harvest Festival  
Wider use of social media planned  
Encourage improved accessibility

### **Kelso Square**

Marketing toolkit and app  
App will promote events  
Border Union Show and Civic Week  
Community Cinema

### **Caernarfon**

Free wifi in high street  
Website promoting events  
Exploring high street card  
Plan to be plastic free in two years  
Umbrella art installation

### **Carmarthen**

Better web presence for small traders

Digital map with videos for visitors

Carmarthen Food platform to help sell food

Food Friday street market

Improved disabled access and employment opportunities for customers with learning difficulties

Green Scope Zero waste shop opened

Green programme and Nurture Centre championing health and wellbeing

Hanging basket scheme

Planned re-development of velodrome

### **Llanelli**

Programme of events for all ages e.g. Pirate themed childrens days, Circus skills,

First food and drink festival

80's festival and Great Llanelli Get Together

Greater use of social media to promote and share events

### **Mold High Street**

Digital Trail App

Active use of social media

Planting of 75 new trees in town centre

Annual Spring Clean event with 720 volunteers

25 new defibrilators placed around town in Mayors 'Save a Life' scheme

Training for local people on defib.

Improved welcome signage

Tourist information points within the town

### **Welshpool**

Council run free projects for community

1940's weekend, fireworks night, Country and Western festival

Local businesses offer craft workshops and open mic nights

Quiet days to help elderly and anxious customers

Aim to improve accessibility for those with mobile disabilities and visual impairment

### **Caldicot Monmouthshire**

£9.1 million regeneration programme

Social media support for businesses

Events from food festivals to specialist markets

Caldicot Town Team also run treasure hunts with items hidden in shops

Fiver fest

Calidcot Goes Pop! Offering pop up shop scheme

Free wifi in town centre also offered to town centre shops

### **High Street Pembroke**

Shop Reward Scheme

Visit Pembroke website and new Town Guide with cheap advertising for businesses  
Monthly litter picks  
Digital Town Trail  
River Boat Rally, Pembroke County Market  
Annual Dog Shop, Charity Coffee Mornings  
Exploring feasibility of Town Heritage Centre

### **Armagh**

Grow your town centre business masterclasses  
Armagh Ambassadors programme  
Evening Economy Strategy  
£2.4 million funding for broadband in city centre  
Restoring public area mall  
£2m programme to enhance arrival into town, carparks and pedestrian linkage to city.

### **Newry**

Digital Stakeholder Engagement event in partnership with Ulster University.  
70 free training programmes including ecommerce and GDPR  
Myster shopping scheme  
Grafitti clean up  
Racing car visit, traditional music festival, fun run, tourist centred cycle  
VIP Newry Shopping scheme  
Aim to bring fast wifi to high street  
Pride in Newry

### **Ballymena**

Refresh the town brand with radio, social media and billboards  
Murals with local artists in town centres  
Ballymena Bears  
Annual Traders Discount late night shopping event  
Harmony Hub - all year round performance space  
Midtown Sounds - artist venues  
Pop-Up Pipers - music in town centre by pipers to entertain

### **Carrickfergus**

Community Fashion Show  
Summer Artisan Festival  
Music Festival  
Mystery Shopping exercise for feedback  
Shop Carrick app  
Shop Local campaign

## **Champion High Street**

### **Hitchen**

Concerts, comedy walks & talks and a Hitchin Festival



Speciality shopping street days  
Bi annual litter pick  
Coffee logs made from used coffee beans from cafes (then sold on)  
Website  
Business Improvement District

### **Freeman Street Grimbsy**

Market that hosts record fairs, circus workshops, films  
Enterprise Shop where children can sell their own products  
Craft Fair  
Cycle Storage Facilities  
Social Media  
Hosts MP & Cllr's surgeries

### **Belper**

Town Centre partnership - social media and website  
Events - Pumpkin trail, Bunny Hop  
Bi Annual food festival  
Slow shopping hour to support accessibility  
Hosts a Pride event  
Climate Initiatives - Refill Belper, Sharing not Wasting Project and Repair café - focused on repairing not replacing

### **Turiff**

May Day, Christmas Lights  
Coo corner - local events space  
Accessible  
Most business have their own web presence

### **Prestwick**

Motto - businesses support community, community support the businesses  
Lighting up Day - local businesses thank customers with businesses  
Relaxed lane in supermarket  
Coffee shops leads on litter picking  
Prestwick loves digital - free wifi

### **Alness High Street**

Accessible  
Dementia friendly  
Christmas Shopping Night  
Volunteers work with Council to keep town clean  
Most shops have a strong media presence  
20 mph speed limit in town  
Festival of running

### **Narbeth High Street**

Food festival  
Plant sale in May  
Civic week with local schools  
Social Media  
High number of independent businesses

### **High Street Swansea**

£25million investment for new Urban Village  
Space for digital start ups  
Weekly car boot sale  
Swansea BID has an extra mile award - 4 businesses won  
Business Improvement District

### **High Street Treorchy**

80% independent  
Outdoor cinema  
Art festival  
Christmas Parae  
Website  
Refill scheme  
Hop, Shop & Save - businesses who advertise on buses in return for discounts for customers with bus tickets

### **High Street - Newtownards**

Accessibility  
Refurbishment grant gave 98 businesses funds revamp shops fronts  
Viking Day  
Fashion Show  
Pumpkin Path  
BBQ summer  
Every Customer Counts  
Refill  
Social Media

### **Enniskillen**

Easter Egg Hunt  
Operation Elsewhere (interactive street theatre)  
Craft & food festival  
Funding secured to carry out improvements for toilets, shop fronts, signage and public art  
Experience Enniskillen - gift card  
Free wifi  
Free social media workshops for businesses  
Business Improvement District

### **Lisburn**

Lisburn Light Festival

Pocket parks - vacant sites given some TLC

Shop Local Scheme - Love Lisburn - offers provided to customers by local businesses and promoted by community groups

Digital platforms