

REPORT TO EVENTS AND TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT REPORT



Report Reference E-20-11
Meeting Date 15th March 2021
Agenda Item 6
Prepared by Town Centre and Marketing Officer

1.0 COVID 19 IMPACT SURVEYS

Two surveys were sent out in February; to date 361 individuals have completed the resident survey and 36 businesses have completed the business survey.

The TCMO is continuing to promote the surveys, especially to the business sector and in particular the hospitality sector which is under-represented. A full analysis will be presented at the next Events and Town Centre Management Committee meeting.

2.0 TOWN CENTRE POSTERS

The TCMO has been working with local agency Bella Marketing and Design to produce a series of posters to be placed in the town centre and used in social media campaigns. A brief look through the residents' survey responses does show that many are anxious about visiting the town and on the other spectrum, some 'disagree with all current restrictions and let's get back to normal now'. These posters will play a small part in reminding the community we have a collective responsibility to keep Knutsford safe and think of others so restrictions can be lifted on June 21st.

The posters are attached and the TCMO invites feedback. Please note these are to be in place by April 12th.

Arrangements are being made for the Town Council bunting to be installed before April 12th as part of the reopening of the town centre. The TCMO is also arranging for six sanitiser stations to be placed in the town centre to provide additional sanitising facilities and help promote a sense of safety in the town centre.

3.0 TOWN CENTRE VACANCY RATES

The vacancy rate currently stands at 9% falling to just under 7% if excluding units under offer. The building that formerly housed Laura Ashley has been sold and is being split into two units.

4.0 TOWN CENTRE FOOTFALL

According to data provided by Cheshire East, town centre footfall was down by the following (when compared to the same month last year):

	Knutsford	National average
December	-10%	-50%
January	-45%	-72%

5.0 HARPER DENNIS HOBBS VITALITY RANKINGS

As reported in the local press, Knutsford was placed 30th in the top English shopping destinations in the above survey. This was a jump of 74 places from the previous year.

The Knutsford Guardian article is here -

<https://www.knutsfordguardian.co.uk/news/19076925.knutsford-ranked-one-britains-best-performing-shopping-destinations/>

6.0 KNUTSFORD VOUCHER

With little promotion, £300 worth of Knutsford Vouchers have been purchased since January. £10 vouchers remain sold out and will be restocked in due course. The TCMO will recommence promoting the vouchers to support local shopping in the run up to Mothers' Day and the re-opening of non-essential shops.

7.0 TOWN CENTRE TALK

The first issue of the 'Town Centre Talk' newsletter was distributed during February. It was emailed to numerous community groups and dropped off at local retirement homes, Knutsford Market Hall and supermarkets. It is a trial and the next one will be issued in April (for the re-opening) and hopefully can be available from the library, Curzon and more shops. Feedback is invited.