

REPORT TO EVENTS WORKING GROUP TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT REPORT

Report Reference E-21-08
Meeting Date 12th July 2021
Agenda Item 6
Prepared by Town Centre and Marketing Officer



1.0 HEAD OUT NOT HOME

Following the extension of coronavirus restrictions into July, and in discussion with Cheshire East Council, the planned July al fresco dining event was cancelled. The two remaining events will take place on 6 and 7th August and 10th and 11th September.

The following venues are taking part: Cheshire House Bar and Grill, Real Fruit Creamery, King Street Kitchen, Piccolinos, The Tea Room, Evuna, Wine and Wallop, Rose and Crown, Gusto, Copper 29 and D13.

The road closures are confirmed as King Street (by Chic Interiors to Egerton Square) and Princess Street (outside Lost and Found). Lost and Found, will review its participation after the first event. The TCMO is working with other hospitality venues to help ensure footfall for all.

The first road closure application has been submitted and Amberon appointed as traffic management contractors. The application for September requires submission by July 24th. The cost of the two weekends is to £1,638.75. This cost is 'at risk' pending funding, via Cheshire East, from the Welcome Back Fund.

It has been suggested that Minshull Street should have a separate road closure to allow two businesses to utilise outside space (Project 53 and Turmeaus). The suggestion was that it should be on a different day due to the impact of closing both King Street and Minshull Street. If the council was to arrange this the indicative cost would be £750 per closure.

2.0 TOWN CENTRE VACANCY RATES

The town centre vacancy rate currently stands at just below 6% which reduces to just over 5% taking out those which are under offer. Since the last report, the following businesses have opened or are in the process of opening:

- Detaljer
- Majestic Wines
- Apus Peak

Knutsford Nails and Beauty has closed since the last report.

The TCMO is of the understanding that the buildings formerly occupied by Rohan and Jacobs have leases being negotiated. The building that was formerly Broadbents has 4 tenants confirmed or in the process of being confirmed. The TCMO is currently in the process of visiting all new businesses.

3.0 FLOWERS IN WALLWOOD AND RHS TATTON SHOW

There are 23 participants in the Flowers in Wallwood initiative this year. A photoshoot with the sponsors (Little Waitrose and Eleven Recruitment) Knutsford Town Mayor, TCMO, Town Ranger and most of the participants is scheduled to take place on Thursday 15th July at the Council Offices. After reviewing the option of distributing the flowers across the town centre, it has been determined it would be impractical and Wallwood will therefore be used as the venue. The flowers will be installed on Thursday 15th July.

As expected, participants for the RHS and/or Council Floral Walk are considerably lower than previous years. There are 10 entered into the RHS and an additional 2 for the Council's competition. The RHS competition is judged on Wednesday 21st July by the RHS judges. Knutsford Town Mayor and former Tatton Park head gardener Sam Youd will judge the council competition on Thursday 22nd July.

4.0 TOWN CENTRE FOOTFALL

The footfall figures for April showed an increase of 213% compared to April 2020 and 5% compared to April 2019. This compares to a national increase of 241% from April 2020 to April 2021.

This is the last benchmarking figures provided by Cheshire East Council although the TCMO understands the council has asked for it to be continued and funded via the Welcome Back Fund. A footfall/benchmarking survey for Knutsford Market Hall is currently being undertaken. A wider town one (and an additional market one) is planned for November 2021.

5.0 KNUTSFORD VOUCHER

£365 worth of Knutsford Vouchers were sold between April and early July. Quotations have been sought to re-print the same amount of £10 and £5 vouchers as previously purchased. The vouchers are being spent at a variety of businesses from Mozimo and Roberta Beauty Redefined to Woods Butchers and Jonty's Fruit and Veg. The TCMO is promoting them to new businesses and has signed up Deliveroot and Cheshire House Bar and Grill.

6.0 TOWN CENTRE TALK

The second issue of the above was distributed to various outlets including the Market Hall, retirement homes, shops, and library. There has been no response to the competition contained in the flyer, so the Town Centre Manager has no current plans to continue with these flyers.

7.0 TASTE KNUTSFORD

Taste Knutsford tours were postponed in response to the extension of lockdown restrictions. One private tour of 9 took place with two tour guides (in two bubbles following Covid guidelines) and was very successful acting as a refresher for future tours. Booking confidence does seem to have been hit by the continuation of restrictions but the TCMO is hoping this will change with the impending government announcement. Tours will recommence on 23rd July.

8.0 KNUTSFORD AT HOME

A second planning meeting is to take place with participants for the above 'shopping experience' which is planned for September 18th. Shops currently taking part are Arthur Lee, Susie Watson Designs, Sofa and Stuff, Oka, Serenity Designs, Design Equals, Not a Box and Holly Johnson Antiques.

A tentative date of late September has been scheduled in for restaurant week although this may change with Knutsford taking part in National Hospitality Day, announced on 5th July and set to take place on September 18th.

9.0 WELCOME BACK PACK.

The Welcome Back day has been re-arranged for Saturday 31st July. There will be free parking from 10am in Silk Mill, Tatton, and King Street car parks and hopefully singing from Knutsford Beats in Regent Street.

The pack contains 'goodies or promotion from the following retailers –

- Pulse of Perfumery
- The Bath House
- Amelia Naylor
- Roberta Beauty Redefined
- Cranford Café
- Diamond Nails
- CarrotBananaPeach
- Bare Necessities
- Tatton Brewery
- Willow
- Knutsford Heritage Centre

There are also Taste Knutsford, Knutsford Music Festival and Tatton Park Pop-Up Festival flyers with one bag containing £50 of Knutsford Vouchers.

10.0 FOODIE FESTIVAL AND TATTON PARK POP-UP FESTIVAL

An information table for all things Knutsford is being arranged for the Foodie Festival with the kind co-operation of John Paul Jeffs of Cheshire Quality. Tatton Park pop-up festival also has promotional leaflets for Taste Knutsford and Knutsford Music Festival