

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



Report Reference E-21-09
Meeting Date 13th September
Agenda Item 7
Prepared by Town Centre and Marketing Officer

1.0 HEAD OUT NOT HOME

The August Alfresco dining evenings were cancelled due to unseasonable weather. The September King Street alfresco dining evenings will have taken place by the date of the meeting and the Minshull Street evening takes place on September 18th.

The following King Street venues are taking part: Cheshire House Bar and Grill, King Street Kitchen, Piccolino, The Tea Room, Evuna, Wine and Wallop and Rose and Crown whilst the Minshull Street venues are Project 53, La Casa Del Habano and Café on the Corner

The road closures are confirmed as King Street (by Chic Interiors to Egerton Square) and the full length of Minshull Street.

The small section of Princess Street (outside the Lost and Found) although covered in the original road closure application will remain open as the one participating venue can no longer take part due to recruitment issues. A fourth venue which was to take part in the Minshull Street closure has also withdrawn due to recruitment issues.

The total projected costs for the Head out Not Home initiative is £2,199.

2.0 TOWN CENTRE VACANCY RATES

The town centre vacancy rate remains static at just below 6% which reduces to just over 5% taking out those which are under offer. Since the last report one business has opened (Blossom, Princess Street).

Delia Metcalfe will be closing in September although a new lease has already been signed.

Letting agents have reported strong interest in empty properties. As far as the TCMO is aware there is a sale progressing on the building formerly home to the Freemasons; King Street Nails and Beauty looks set to return to residential and a lease has been agreed on the former Jacob's building.

3.0 FLOWERS IN WALLWOOD AND RHS TATTON SHOW

The above events took place in July.

Flowers in Wallwood was sponsored by Eleven Recruitment and Little Waitrose. The community

event included retirement and care homes for the first time and was well received by residents. The flowers are currently being carefully removed by the Town Ranger for returning to the participants. It is envisaged the initiative will return next year.

The RHS Competition was won by first time entrant Irlams Estate Agents and the council's winner was Nicholas Austen.

The number of entrants for both competitions were considerably lower than previous years more than likely due to the pandemic. This was also the same for the Altrincham based competition.

4.0 TOWN CENTRE FOOTFALL

Cheshire East Council is still receiving footfall figures from Visitor Insights and for Knutsford they are as follows –

May	118% increase compared to 2020 figures 1% decrease compared to 2019
June	48% increase compared to 2020 figures 2% decrease compared to 2019 figures
July	37% increase compared to 2020 figures 1% increase compared to July 2019

August figures are yet to be received.

5.0 KNUTSFORD VOUCHER

£310 of £5 vouchers sold between mid-July and end of August The £10 vouchers were recently re-printed in early August and £140 have been sold so far.

£3,530 of vouchers remain to be redeemed by the end of 2021 and the Town Centre and Marketing Officer will increase promotion of this during the forthcoming months. Shops will also be reminded not to accept vouchers that have exceeded their use by date.

Detaljer and I Vape have been added to the scheme.

6.0 KNUTSFORD ONE

The first in person meeting of Knutsford One is to take place on Wednesday 8th September at Apus Peak. One agenda item is the impact of Covid and Brexit and the hospitality industry in particular has been hit hard by the national recruitment crisis with almost every establishment having unfilled vacancies. The TCMO has learnt from one other business that the cost of shipping containers has increased threefold and some other businesses are struggling to obtain raw goods.

At least four hospitality businesses have signed up for the Cheshire East Hospitality Academy.

The loyalty scheme will also be promoted at this meeting. The number of businesses taking part so far is 25. The TCMO is aiming for 40 before this scheme is launched.

Feedback from the two recent Makers Market has overall been positive.

7.0 TASTE KNUTSFORD

The tours have re-commenced with the following tours taking place –

- June 26th private tour for 9
- July 23rd – tour for 4
- August 7th – tour for 11
- August 21st – tour for 10
- September 3rd – private tour for 10 (company day out)
- September 4th – tour for 4

October's two tours currently stand at 9 and 11 respectively

Plastic Free Weigh and The Market Butcher have been added to the market hall offer alongside Morgan Edwards and The Market Café.

8.0 KNUTSFORD AT HOME

September 18th is the date for the above event. A leaflet detailing the full programme has been distributed across the town plus posters for each shop and a town centre banner.

9.0 TOWN CENTRE VISITOR MAP

The adverts for the above have all been sold and the TCMO is writing copy for the map with the aim of the map being released in November.