

NEWPORTFIRST

Diary Dates..... On Tuesday 7th April 2015 the 'town team' will hold its AGM. Nominations are invited for positions of Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Treasurer, & Secretary plus one vacant director post. Please inform the Town Team Manager at least 7 days prior to the meeting. Usual time and place = **6.15 pm at The Phez.**

The town team's business meeting will follow on from the AGM and will include the usual information sharing slot as well as a discussion session on forthcoming priorities and actions. If you have agenda items (issues or ideas) please forward to the TTM.

St George's Day Parade..... Newport's annual St. George's Day Parade will take place on Saturday 25th April 2015.

This year's event will follow the usual format with a parade **starting at ~12.00 noon** from The Shakespeare PH along the High Street to the Town Square where a re-enactment of St. George slaying the dragon will take place.

Whilst the parade is the focus of the day's event there will be a host of **activities starting from 10.00 am** and running **through to about 4.00 pm**

Acts include street artists, musicians, Morris dancers. There is to themed food provided by local traders, and Newport Rotary Club will be running the mile of pennies for local charities.



All Newport traders / businesses are encouraged to get involved in this whole-town event by participating in a window dressing competition, and in any other appropriate way.

Full details of street closures are to be provided in the April 2015 Newsletter.

Contacting the Town Team:-

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Actions Speak Louder than Words..... Whilst the recent High Street Health-Check survey findings were **overwhelmingly positive** there were one or two issues that cannot be ignored and need to be addressed. Not least of these was a slight increase in the number of businesses affected by crime with much of this being criminal damage.

As you would expect the Town Team Manager has shared these findings with the police via the Newport Safer Neighbourhood Team. They are already aware of the issues and have started to put into place measures to help reduce or eradicate these crimes.

Perhaps the most exciting initiative is the proposed **introduction of a Pub Watch Scheme** with local pubs agreeing to coordinate information between themselves and with the local policing team. This is to be complemented by a **higher profile policing presence** at key times including patrols, a more regular CSO presence, and periodic promotional events using a purpose designed vehicle.

An assessment is also to be carried of reported crimes within Newport town centre area to provide a reality check on our local survey findings, and the police have agreed to offer **advice and guidance to local traders** at a future town team meeting.

In recent months Twigs, Francesca's, Michelle's Sweet Shop, G&A Cards and other traders have experienced broken shop windows and / or damaged doors. Thankfully **some culprits have been identified** and paid for their misdemeanour.

However, not all crimes are solved and many traders / businesses are left with expensive bills or increased insurance premiums. *We know that crime is relatively low in Newport but it hurts when you are a victim* so let's work together to eradicate it from our town centre.

POSITIVE RESPONSE TO TRADER FEEDBACK..... Newport Town Council hosted an inter-organisation events coordination meeting back in January to review pre-Christmas events and to assess whether overall coordination could be improved for 2015.

There was a good consensus of opinion with a commitment to:-

- Run a **single major pre-Christmas event** - coordinating the interest and resources of the town council, chamber, town team, and privately initiated events;
- Recommend **bringing forward the Christmas Lights switch-on** by one week to extend the festive atmosphere within the town centre;
- Assess options for **improving Christmas street decorations** and lighting along Lower Bar;
- **Improve communications** between organisations, with traders / businesses and with shoppers, visitors & residents to help maximise impact of these community events.

Further Updates will be provided in future Newsletters