

NEWPORTFIRST

SUMMARY ANNUAL REPORT 2015

2014/15 has been another challenging year for Newport town centre's traders and local businesses. The past year has seen indications of improvement in the economy, and yet turnover of unique, choice providing independent retail traders in Newport's town centre remains high. By working together we can create longer-term sustainable improvements.

What has the town team done to help in the past year?

- ✓ Jointly, promoted a Newport 'Loyalty Card' initiative to bring more trade to Newport;
- ✓ Published interim and comparative reports showing how well Newport is doing compared to other similar market towns;
- ✓ Carried out a business crime survey, produced a report analysing results, and set out actions to help protect shops & businesses from crime;
- ✓ Circulated a monthly newsletter to ensure town centre shops & business are informed;
- ✓ Held monthly business meetings providing a forum to share ideas, issues and solutions including workshops on business rate reductions & business / cyber crime prevention;
- ✓ Proactively promoted town centre businesses, liaised with event organisers to encourage greater footfall, and continued to promote the 'shop local' campaign;
- ✓ Published 'welcome packs' for new residents & 'fresher' students at Harper Adams Uni;
- ✓ Worked closely with local shops and a retail expert to provide specialist retail advice and support for over 20 local retailers;
- ✓ Jointly with TCAT initiated social media training for traders to improve their marketing & promotions, and also created opportunities for consumer feedback;
- ✓ Continued to provide open & transparent governance of all town team business.

And, What will the town team be doing to support businesses in the coming year?

- Supporting retailers to make better use of social media, on-line sales, and new technologies to help improve your trade;
- Developing Newport's heritage offer to help attract more visitors;
- Supporting collaborative initiatives to improve the town centre environment;
- Bidding for funds so that town-wide events can be improved & promoted better;
- Exploring opportunities for collective purchasing to reduce business costs;
- Delivering the 'Pride in Your High Street' programme of improvements, and much more!!

Not To Be Missed..... We have two really topical items lined up for the town team's September meeting with Steve Graves (Robert Nicholas Financial Services) providing an overview of requirements of the new **Work Place Pensions Regulations** for traders & small businesses like you; and Charmaine Woolley will be joining us to discuss actions arising from the recent **Business Crime Survey**. Usual time & place: 6.15 pm Tuesday 8th September 2015 in the lodge at the rear of The Pheasant PH (The Phez)

Contacting the Town Team:-**Mike Atherton, Newport's Town Team Manager**Email: newportshropstownteam@hotmail.co.uk Tel: 07581 454882Website: <http://www.allaboutnewport.co.uk/newport-shropshire/town-team.php>Face-book: www.facebook.com/newporttownteam

Christmas is coming..... An early prompt for local traders and businesses - unlike previous years the 2015 Christmas Lights Parade & Switch on is to be held on **Saturday 28th November** following a day-long programme of events. Lower Bar will be closed to provide for the **St, Nicholas Christmas Fair** which is being organised by Mr Rodney Pitt. Further details and information will to follow in future newsletters.

Business Crime Survey.....

Thank you to all of you that found time to complete the recent Business Crime Survey. Given the very short window in which the survey was carried out we had an excellent response. As a consequence the Police Crime Prevention Unit and T&WC's Community Safety team have agreed to work with us to: (i) see how *CCTV* can be more effectively used to prevent/detect crime; (ii) develop a '**Shop Watch**' scheme; (iii) introduce a **crime audit checklist & training** for shops & businesses; and (iv) encourage use of *smartwater technology* for marking valuable items. More information available at the September town team meeting.

Devolving Sunday Trading Rules..... Government is seeking views of traders about options to devolve Sunday Trading rules to local areas. If agreed this would allow local authorities to have locally agreed Sunday opening hours. You can find more information and respond at <https://bisgovuk.citizenspace.com/ccp/devolving-Sunday-trading-rules>

Superfast Broadband (SFB)..... Many traders and local businesses will have received a visit in the past week or two from representatives of a company called AGS who are promoting an initiative to bring improved superfast broadband to Newport with an added benefit that would give us '**free**' **Wi Fi throughout the town centre** area. Whilst there is no obligation on you it is worth listening to what they have to say as AGS may be able to help you save money and also improve your internet service.

Membership Subscriptions..... A huge **thank you** to all those traders / businesses that have already paid their 2015/16 town team membership subscriptions - greatly appreciated.

And a brief reminder if you haven't yet paid - BACS transfers to Lloyds Bank, Acct No: 14641560 & Sort Code: 30-96-02; or cheques / cash direct to the town team manager, or post to c/o 53 Beechfields Way, Newport, Shropshire TF10 8QA **THANK YOU.**