



Kidsgrove Town Centre Partnership Update for Scrutiny December 2014

MARKETING

Regular Newsletters continue to be hand-delivered to every business in Kidsgrove town centre and Butt Lane shops as well as being sent electronically to an e-mailing list of about 80 stakeholders.

Social Networking - a key part of our marketing strategy and we already have over 500 likes for the Go Kidsgrove Facebook Community page and over 110 Go Kidsgrove Twitter followers.

Place Branding Support – following on from our successful application to the Association of Town and City Management (ATCM) for place branding support we are working to develop the 'Go Kidsgrove' brand and are using it across all media platforms wherever possible. Based on their initial research, ATCM identified three key words – leisure, heritage, community - to consider when developing any promotional material.

Website –<http://www.gokidsgrove.co.uk> is now live and the KTCCIC will be canvassing local businesses to become members asking them to pay a £5 annual membership to get an enhanced listing on the website.

EVENTS

Independent Christmas Shopping Challenge 2013 was popular with all participating businesses. A second challenge was also run at Easter. Businesses in Kidsgrove felt that it did have a positive impact on raising awareness about their business and some reported a direct impact in terms of sales. The 2014 Christmas shopping challenge is running from 29th November to 23rd December.

Vintage and Crafts August 2014

Following on from many requests for an Artisan type market in the town centre KTCCIC teamed up local business Lula Bop Vintage to host a Vintage and Craft market on King Street Car Park in the town centre. The event was sufficiently successful to warrant doing it again. The Town Council is considering running a regular craft market at the Victoria Hall so the two organisations will need to work together to maximise the benefits for the town.

Heritage Walks September 2014

We were made aware of Heritage Open Days and with being a town centre packed with heritage we were keen to do something and we felt the best person the job is local published historian Philip Leese and we worked with Philip to host Heritage Walks around the town and along the canal which proved popular. Philip was also involved in the Halloween Trail on 31 Oct and 1st Nov which involved storytellers based in several locations in the town centre telling spooky stories.

Event Promotion

We also continue to promote events by other organisations and we receive regular updates from Kidsgrove Town Council, Kidsgrove Rotary, Kidsgrove Library and Kidsgrove Athletic FC. We have also captured approximately 100 email addresses to circulate regular event updates to.

ENVIRONMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Waterfront Project

From some of our very first meetings it became clear that a project to improve the canal waterfront should be a local priority and we were given Jon Honeysett MBE's plan he developed to provide more moorings, improve lighting and security and access to the towpath. We will be developing these plans through a partnership approach to take forward a scheme.

This project would be consistent with the Newcastle-under-Lyme and Stoke-on-Trent Urban Design Guidance that there is a need to 'address and exploit the canal frontage' and 'improve and enhance the quality of pedestrian links to the railway station and canal'.

We have since prepared a clear list of short, mid and long term projects and identified some basic costings and the project has now been put forward for European Regional Development Fund and Local Growth Fund.

Market Street

We were asked from the start to look into the feasibility of making Market Street one way in order to solve the traffic problems along there and after consulting with Staffordshire County Council Highways we have begun the initial consultation with all traders and residents along Market Street to see whether they would be in favour or opposed to a one way system being introduced. If everyone is on favour then we will obviously look into what can be achieved and liaise further with relevant Members and Officers the County Councils Highways department.

Christmas Lights

We have been asked to consult on Kidsgrove's Christmas lights and we have big plans to ensure longevity and growth. We propose to purchase our own lights for the town with funding from local traders and other organisations; this will mean they will be with us year on year and we aim to procure more year on year too. We also propose to use a local company to install and maintain the lights for the festive period making it more sustainable. Also, we propose to add more festive lights in the town centre adjacent to the King Street precinct and a permanent tree in the town centre which will be illuminated during the festive period.

We have started consulting with residents to see whether they would like to sponsor a bulb for £1 in memory of a loved one on the new tree in the town centre and we have already received a lot of positive feedback to this idea; this will obviously provide an income which can be used towards Christmas lights in future.