Happy New Year everyone!

This issue of BID news is all about reflecting on the past few months, looking forward and preparing for the year ahead.

Reflecting on 2013, retail health and performance appears to be heading in the right direction. The number of visitors to the town continues to increase year on year. Leamington Spa is also attracting new investment as shown by a declining vacancy rate.

These positive trends are not being seen in other towns and, as a result, the town has attracted national media attention to see what we are doing differently.

Over the Christmas period, trading reports were up and down but generally business started slow and finished strong. In the Royal Priors Shopping Centre, 67% of retailers achieved or exceeded their Christmas trading targets and footfall was up 2% on last year with just over 1 million people through the door. The sale week – Boxing Day to the New Year – was also strong with footfall up 5% on last year.

Looking forward, 2014 is going to be an exciting year, with a number of new events on the Town Centre calendar to capitalize on in creative ways.

Highlights include the ‘Love Leam’ promotion in February and the launch of the ‘Love Leamington’ website which will become a community ‘hub’ for finding out about all things ‘Leam’.

A Royal Leamington Spa exhibit will be appearing at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show in May then coming home for the 200 year anniversary of the Pump Room Gardens! In July we will see the return of the Leamington Carnival and Summer Festival. Then in August we will be welcoming both men and women bowlers to Royal Leamington Spa for the World Championships, followed by the Food & Drink Festival in September.

Alongside this, we will continue to invest in promotions and enhancements to ensure that Leamington provides visitors with a spectacular welcome.

We will also continue to support businesses as we know there are still many real challenges to the high street.

With this in mind, please take a look at the Business Toolbox inside.

Finally, it is important to remember that BID Leamington is a ‘business-led partnership’ which means it is driven by your ideas and feedback. Please do not hesitate to get in touch with myself or Alison if you are interested in becoming a Board member in the future, or have ideas you would like us to consider.

Stephanie and Alison
**Getting Involved**

### Board Positions

Each year in June, we invite applications to the Board so please get in touch if you would like to discuss this with us. Comprising 13 levy payers, including 2 positions available to Voluntary levy payers together with a representative from the District and County Councils, the Board guides all activities delivered by BID Leamington.

Board members bring with them a range of skills and expertise from different industry sectors and meet every 4-6 weeks to ensure the business plan is delivered on time and on budget.

**Please call us if you would like to arrange a meeting to discuss Board opportunities.**

**Tel: 01926 470 634 for details**

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### Open Meetings

**Venue:** Arts Trail Studio, Regent Court Shopping Centre, 6pm with networking from 5.30pm

**When:** Wednesday 26th February

Based on your feedback we host regular **Open Meetings**. These are a useful way to hear about upcoming plans, to give us feedback, to **network with other businesses** and get some ideas and inspiration from our guest speakers. Moving forward we would like to develop the business networking opportunities that these meetings offer and are looking for different venues to **host these meetings**. Please drop us a line if you are interested and we look forward to seeing you at the next meeting on Wednesday 26th February.

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### Leamington Jobs Fair

**Tuesday 4th March, 2014**

A **Jobs Fair** will be held at the Town Hall in Leamington Spa bringing employers and potential employees together.

Activities and opportunities include:

- Local retailers who are looking for **new recruits** are invited to attend – spaces are limited so please register your interest by emailing chris.white.mp@parliament.uk

- **Presentations and seminars** are planned on topics such as **apprenticeships**, writing a CV and preparing for an interview

- Organisations supporting the event include Chris White MP, the Leamington Business Forum, Warwickshire College, JobCentre Plus and key local employers.
More and more businesses are finding it valuable to work together to achieve mutually beneficial goals, expand their contacts and enhance the overall experience for their customers.

Ruth Waring is a local business woman who will join us once again at our next Open Meeting to offer advice on effective networking. Ruth started her own networking group which now has over 3000 members nationwide and she wins most her business using this method. Below are ten of her top tips:

**Networking tips:**
- Arrive psyched up, smartly dressed and armed with Business Cards
- Identify people with whom you’d like a future 1-2-1, and say so. Flatter them, then move on and don’t lose the networking opportunity by speaking to just one person
- Be really polite to people, and positive – make yourself memorable
- Don’t ignore all the people who appear to be a waste of time. Think about the people they might know and paint a picture to unlock their thoughts about good contacts for you
- Do follow ups - use the CardMunch app to take photos of business cards and invite Linkedin connections with little effort!

**LinkedIn Tips**
- Take time to set up a great profile, with a professional picture, go right back to school and include your maiden name
- Make good use of groups and connect with fellow members; use the Discussion Boards wisely though
- Search for company names to find people who work for a specific organisation – great for business development
- Use the “Export Data” function to add your connection to your CRM system/email contact list outside LinkedIn (more effective than LinkedIn emails which tend to get deleted)
- Use it to advertise vacancies (free jobs tab) and search for people who might like to work for you.

You can follow Ruth on Twitter: @RuthWaring
www.labyrinthsolutions.co.uk/blog/2013/03/ruths-top-tips-for-networking-linkedin-and-twitter/

Please join us on 26th February to put some of this into practice.
BID ACTIVITIES – WHAT’S COMING UP…

‘Love Leam’ month
When: 1st - 28th February 2014
Tapping into the theme of ‘Love’ around Valentine’s Day, we plan to run a month of activities to celebrate all things Leamington at a time when visit numbers and spirits in the Town Centre need a boost. Each week has a different theme to tap into different interests and support different sectors.

Week 1: February 1st - 8th Love Life in Leam
Week 2: February 8th - 15th Love Leam: Let’s Paint the Town RED!
Week 3: February 15th - 22nd Love Family (mid term break)
Week 4: February 22nd - 28th Spring into Action

Throughout the month there will be workshops, talks, activities and competitions - all designed to bring people into the town centre.

This project benefits from a contribution from Warwickshire County Council’s ‘Operation Footfall’ and its success will depend on as many businesses getting involved as possible – plus there is plenty of room to have a little fun with it! For more info, please see the new, dedicated website: www.loveleamington.com

Leamington Carnival & Summer Festival
Organised by CJ Events

When: 12th and 13th July
After a very long absence, CJ Events are bringing the Carnival back to Leamington Spa. They are also organising a Summer Festival. This will be a very community-orientated event with a focus on celebrating the town and there are many ways to get involved.

If you would like any further details, please do not hesitate to get in touch with Jamie on 01926 800 750 or via email on jamie@cjseventswarwickshire.co.uk

More information can be found on the website: www.leamingtonsummerfestival.co.uk

How to Get Involved:

Consider these ideas for making the most of this event:

- Help us ‘Paint the Town Red’ with our RED WINDOWS COMPETITION! The best ‘Red Window’ will WIN £150 of design services from Identity Studio – that’s artwork for a flyer or poster.
- Host a ‘Love Leam’ event in your shop. We will promote it on the ‘Love Leam’ website and in the local papers in the relevant week. What about a tasting, new product showcase or themed talk?
- Display our new ‘Love Leam’ Poster in your window and challenge your customers to take our ‘Love Leam’ Shop Local Challenge!
- Help us reward customers for shopping locally and get into the ‘Love Leam’ spirit by distributing ‘Love Leam’ bags and goodies.
- Tweet it Up! #LoveLeam!

This event is not organised by BID Leamington. For more information please contact CJ Events: Tel 01926 800 750.
Food & Drink Festival

When: 6th and 7th September

Returning this year on the 6th and 7th September, the Leamington Food and Drink Festival has grown into one of the key events in the Royal Leamington Spa calendar and attracted over 25,000 people last year. In 2013 it was featured in the ‘Telegraph’ as one of the Top 10 Food Festivals in the UK as well as appearing on the ‘Chiltern Railways Days Out’ website.

The BID team also raised almost £18,000 in revenue through sponsorship and stall sales which is invested directly back into the Business District. Whilst this is a very popular event within the local community, we are aware that we need to work very hard to ensure that it is relevant to town centre businesses.

How to Get Involved:

Consider these ideas for making the most out of this event:

- **Take advantage of a stall.** There is a FREE stall for every full levy paying business and subsidised stalls for voluntary members subject to availability, so please book early to avoid disappointment.
- **Flyers or discount vouchers** – give us some to distribute for you and make use of the captive audience.
- **Collaborate** – Share a stall with another retailer – 1 day each or half / half. Cheese & wine anyone? Food and fashion…
- **Non-Food Retailers** – We have an ‘I Love Leamington’ section for non-food related stalls.
- **Restaurants** – ask us about the Taste Trail. You can specify how many dishes you would like to offer and we print bespoke tickets for every restaurant.
- **Submit a recipe** in our Event Programme - 5000 copies are distributed.

Please do give us a call to discuss your ideas – we are very open to new approaches and to help you make the most out of this event.

How other businesses have benefited in the past

- **Cook** fed back: "We had a great weekend and, from the vouchers we gave out on the stand, **20 new customers** went straight from the show up to our shop - a great result."
- **Save the Children** got great value from the ‘I Love Leam’ section for non-food retailers. They ran a tombola, raising a total of **£817.16** to go towards their Syria appeal.
- **Restaurant 23** took part in the Taste Trail and demonstrated on the Live Kitchen. They commented that "the event was great" and congratulated us "on an event well done".

Please do give us a call to discuss your ideas – we are very open to suggestions and are here to help you make the most out of this event.

For more information or to book please email: alison@bidleamington.com or visit the dedicated website:

[www.leamingtonfoodfestival.co.uk](http://www.leamingtonfoodfestival.co.uk)
BUSINESS SUPPORT & TRAINING

First Aid Training
We are organising a workplace emergency first aid course in early 2014. The certified 6 hour course will be delivered over 2 evenings for £20 per head (depending on numbers). Please get in touch if you are interested in learning more about this.

People Begging in the Town Centre - Are you killing with kindness?
The ‘Your Kindness Could Kill’ Campaign was launched in 2013. Together we must continue to use this platform to remind the town’s customers that it is more beneficial to donate money to charities instead of giving it to individuals on the street.

This project is delivered in partnership with the Salvation Army, Christian Mission, Warwickshire Police and the District Council.

Please contact us if you are willing to accommodate a collection box, posters or distribute flyers, or if you need us to empty a collection box.

Town Centre ‘Chugging’ Policy
‘Chugging’ is the term given to people who are seeking donations via ‘direct debit’ for charities from people on the high street. They often arrive in town as a group and cluster around high footfall areas. Over the Christmas period, we received a number of complaints about how they operate and have asked the District Council (WDC) to help us address the issue.

At this stage, WDC are preparing a recommendation for their Executive Committee to allow the PFRA (Public Fundraising Regulatory Association) (www.pfra.org.uk) to take over the organisation and management of such collections in the district. This will introduce a code of conduct which, if they contravene, they will be punished.

As part of the agreement, WDC will continue to monitor the impact of face-to-face data collection in the district.

In the meantime, we will keep you posted on updates. Please contact us if you have any problems with chuggers and we will forward on the information.

MARKETING, PROMOTIONS & ENHANCEMENT

Love Leamington Spa!
In February we will begin our ‘Love Leam’ month. Alongside this, we have launched the ‘Love Leamington’ website which we hope will become a community ‘hub’ for finding out about all things happening in ‘Leam’.

The idea is that it will capture all social media chatter about the town and be a platform for you to engage with the town’s customers in words or images – so please get tweeting #loveleam!

For more info, please see the new, dedicated website: www.loveleamington.com

Guides and Maps
Look out for the newly-revised Royal Leamington Spa maps and guides.

These are available to all retailers to give to customers this spring and will also be distributed regionally. We typically distribute 20,000 every 3 – 4 months.
**Town Centre Loyalty**

**Little Book of Offers**

Each year around 130 offers are included in the popular Little Book of Offers which is produced twice a year.

This year 10,000 books will be distributed and packed full of offers for May, June and July at the beginning of May. Plus an additional 15,000 will be sent out in August, to coincide with the International Bowls and the Food & Drink Festival, with offers up to 31st October.

All offers will also appear on the Royal Leamington Spa website as Spa’kle card offers. Thank you to everyone who has submitted an offer already.

The deadline for the next May edition is 15th March 2014 so please email your offers to alison@bidleamington.com

**Spa’kle Card**

Spa’kle cards are being distributed to those who have signed up, along with an email regarding the offers available on the Royal Leamington Spa website.

All businesses that have an offer in the Little Book of Offers will receive Spa’kle window stickers as well. If you have any further thoughts or ideas around the loyalty scheme please do contact us.

**Royal Leamington Spa Website**

This very popular website will be updated in the New Year to become ‘responsive’. This means that when it is viewed on an apple or android phone, it will appear more like an ‘App’.

It will be designed so that customers can easily access the business directory and offers sections where BID Levy paying businesses are featured.

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**Royal Leamington Spa Merchandise**

We are launching a range of promotional merchandise so the ‘Royal Leamington Spa’ brand can move further afield in the hands of our customers.

If you would like to distribute any of the items please get in touch. They will be competitively priced to cover costs and generate income to support BID activities.

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**Blooming Leamington**

We are pleased to announce that Royal Leamington Spa will be showcased at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show this year. The event is the most prestigious flower show in the world attracting over 160,000 visitors and international media. This ambitious project will draw on the support of many people and businesses in the local community so please get in touch if you would like to get involved. Tapping into the floral DNA of the town, it also ties in with the 200 year anniversary of the Pump Room Gardens and it is hoped the exhibit will return to the town in 2015.

Adding to the floral theme, 250 hanging baskets will once again brighten up the town from early June. They will be spread around to ensure as much coverage as possible, allowing for building restrictions. This year will feature a patriotic red, white and blue theme in commemoration of the anniversary of World War 1. For more information floral activities in our town, please visit: www.bloomingleamington.com
UPDATES & NOTICES

Welcome New Businesses

We are always excited when new businesses open in the town and, in the second half of 2013, Bills, Blythe Bazaar, Collective, Cooperative Food, Family Tree, Fat Moo Moo Classic Sweets, Flirt, Grub Hub, ‘His Place’ Sandwich Shop, L’Occitane en Provence, Mezeme, Muffin Break, Nandos, Poundland, Roman Originals, Regency Brides, Savi’s Café on Regent St, Sip Café, Spangles Sweet Shop, the Textile Anarchist, Warwick St Kitchen, White Stuff and Willow all opened their doors with Turtle Bay soon to follow.

Whilst we know the trading environment remains tough, we are pleased to see our town is still attracting investment from these strong multiples and inventive little independents. If you are new, please get in touch to talk to us about how we can help promote your business.

FREE Meeting Room!

Remember, we have a fully equipped meeting room in Park Street for our BID members to use. The meeting room is ideal for those wanting time away from their own office and is absolutely FREE to members. Please call 01926 470 634 to book.

The Golden Ticket

The Golden Ticket promotion ran between 1st and 22nd December 2013, and once again proved to be a great success. Retailers donated £3500 worth of prizes. 50,000 tickets were distributed by participating retailers. Over 6500 tickets were submitted back to BID Leamington via participating shops and through the post.

The data collected can be broken down into defined streets for each participating retailer, to give retailers an indication as to where their customers come from, and an additional 1000 email addresses were gathered. Please contact us if you would like access to this database.

The Leamington Lantern Parade

December 2013 saw the third Leamington Lantern Parade which has developed into a spectacular and hugely popular event for Leamington Spa involving all aspects of the local community.

This year there were over 1000 lanterns winding their way like a beautiful string of lights around the Pump Room Gardens and town centre. They were made at the seven community workshops held at The Spa Centre, Family Tree, Warwickshire College and local schools.

The parade started with David Harrop entertaining the crowds at the Bandstand and was led by a stilt-walking Santa and his Elf around the Pump Room Gardens, through the town centre to the Town Hall, meeting Santa’s reindeer along the way. For the finale, David and the Royal Spa Brass Band led the delighted crowd in singing Christmas songs as magical snow fell all around.

BID ACTIVITIES REVIEW

Christmas Promotion 2013

What we did and how it was measured?

- Christmas Flyer - 150,000 copies distributed in selected postcodes throughout the region.
- Local & Regional Advertising
  - Observer & Courier Series – 4 weeks of Full Page Adverts (Leamington, Warwick, Coventry, Stratford, Solihull, Daventry, Banbury)
  - Trainline – Onboard Posters East Midlands
  - Magazine Advertising – Aspire, Touchbase, Birmingham Living
  - Shop Local Billboard at the Train Station
  - Radio Advertising on Touch FM and Free Radio
- The Golden Ticket - Over £3500 of prizes and 6500+ entries received.
- Leamington Lantern Parade - 2000 people participated on Thursday 12th December.

BID NEWS LEAMINGTON - SUPPORTING Royal Leamington Spa