Wow, this year has flown and we can’t believe we are already thinking about Christmas and planning activities in 2015! There is a huge amount coming up so we urge you to take this newsletter home and consider how you can get involved in the events and activities.

Over the past six months there have been lots of wonderful examples of businesses working together for mutual gain. Business collaboration has taken many forms, ranging from the huge collaborative effort that saw 86 businesses come together to take the town to RHS Chelsea, to supporting the launch of a new business, showcasing products in each other’s windows and sponsoring local events.

We have also been pleased to see a number of new voluntary groups form to deliver new events in the town. Examples of this include the ‘Leamington Carnival’ which returned in July after an 18 year absence as well as ‘Art in the Park’ held in August and the forthcoming ‘Leamington Business Awards’. These events have benefited hugely with the support of local businesses and volunteers and BID Leamington has been happy to support them where possible.

Looking forward, there is a lot planned. Some of the events are organized by BID Leamington and others are led by voluntary groups and businesses, however either way, we are happy to be a point of contact for information and provide ideas about how you can get involved. Highlights include the ‘Student Lock-in’ in October, ‘Christmas Promotion & Lantern Parade’ starting in November and the ‘Love Leam’ month which will launch on the 14th of February 2015 and run into March.

We are also happy to work with you to foster new relationships with other businesses and this month have launched the ‘Business Collaboration’ space on the BID Leamington website found under ‘supporting’. Please get in touch if you would like to be added.

Finally, it is important that we get your feedback to understand how we can improve our service so please call or request a meeting with either myself or Alison or speak to one of the BID Board of Directors located near you.

Stephanie and Alison
**Dates for Your Diary**

**Events:**

**October**
- Student Lock-In
  - Thursday 9th October

**November**
- Leamington Christmas Light Switch-on
  - Sunday 16th November

**November-December**
- Leamington Golden Ticket
  - Nov 16th - Dec 22nd

**November**
- Late Night Shopping in the Priors Starts
  - Thursday 20th Nov

**December**
- Leamington Lantern Parade
  - Thursday 11th December

**February-March 2015**
- Love Leamington Month
  - Feb 14th - March 15th 2015

**Open Meetings**

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

**Getting Involved**

**Board Positions**

Each year we invite applications to the Board in June so please get in touch if you would like to discuss this with us. Comprising of 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

**In the News**

Leamington’s RHS Chelsea Garden is Coming Home!

As many of you know earlier this year BID Leamington supported a project to take the town to the RHS Chelsea Flower Show, then bring it home again. This project was funded completely by donations from local businesses.

The next step in the project is to bring the arbor back and have it reinstated in the town’s gardens for the local community to enjoy. As this stage we are happy to announce that Warwick District Council have agreed for the garden to go into Jephson Gardens.

It will be located to the rear of East Lodge and developed as a community space accessible to all.

Please get in touch if you would like to find out more about this project or visit: www.bloomingleamington.com.
More and more businesses are finding it valuable to work together to achieve mutually beneficial goals, reward customer loyalty, encourage repeat visits and enhance the overall customer experience.

This is always very important at Christmas time when many businesses have access to higher numbers of customers who are spending, but who are also pressed for time.

We have prepared a few top tips and things to think about to insures that you attract customers and meet their needs at this important time of year:

**Products**
- What are your customers looking for at this time of year? Ask them now…
- How can you help your time-pressed customers? What about…
  - A £5 box or areas of the store with £5, £10 and £15 stocking fillers
  - Pre-wrapped gifts or a ‘Secret Santa’ box
- Can you offer pre-order or pre-payments on items?
- Think about product placement - have ‘hot-spots’ for impulse buys.

**Promotions**
- Start planning for this now - only 11 weeks to go! Think about Christmas and New Year!
- Know your customer and think about how to reach them... flyer, online, social media, local paper, magazines etc.
- Gather customer data e.g. by running a competition. Consider what you need to know and make it simple - so just the email to contact later and postcode to understand where they have come from is enough.
- Reward customers for visiting you! e.g. Invite special guests, have surprise giveaways (every 100th customer).
- Offer an incentive to drive footfall when it is quieter and to encourage a return visit. e.g. a couple to return in January.

**Place**
- Can you make your business Look, Sound, Smell and Taste like Christmas?
- Use your window to grab attention and inspire... it is the eyes to your world!!
- What can you do to create a fun, magical Christmas atmosphere?

**People**
- Offer your customers the more wonderful ‘RLS Christmas Experience’! Think greetings, smiles, personal service, added value, up-sales, ‘can I help with...’ problem solving for your customers.
- Brief the team and get your staff on board and involved.

**Most importantly, have some fun!**

Please join us on the 1st October when Jo Stroud, from Fabulous will join us to share her thoughts on this topic.

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**Partnership Working - The ‘Town Team’ Approach**

Over the past year many businesses have asked us to put them in touch with other businesses that are willing to collaborate in different ways. Examples include:

- **Collaborate on a product launch**, when you are looking for complementary support e.g. catering, shoes, make-up, clothes, jewellery
- **Share a ‘shop window’ to display products**
- **Team up to showcase** your products at specific times of year or to a specific group of customers e.g. Valentine’s Day or Corporate Gifts
- **Exhibit with a partner** restaurant or retail shop e.g. art, jewellery etc.

This innovative ‘team’ approach to retailing, which is mutually beneficial and enhances the customer experience, is something we want to support. Accordingly, we are compiling a list of retailer contacts who like the sound of this. It will be available on the BID Leamington website in the business toolbox this year.

If you wish to be on this list please let us know.

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**Business Diary**

We have recently added a business diary to the BID Leamington website homepage. Here you will find information about forthcoming business meetings and networking events that are run both by BID Leamington as well as other organisations in the town centre. An example of this is the **Leamington Business Forum** which runs monthly breakfast meetings and is offering BID business reduced membership rates. The **Leamington Chamber of Trade** is working hard to represent members interests and runs quarterly meetings. Please see our website or contact us if you would like to know more about these opportunities.

www.bidleamington.com
BID ACTIVITIES - WHAT'S COMING UP...

Student Lock-In

When: 9th October

The students are returning to the town around the 22nd of September. Each year they contribute £64.5 million to the Royal Leamington Spa economy and it could be worth your business tapping into this.

Each year the Royal Priors hosts a ‘Student Lock-in’ which has grown to be a resounding success. Shops open from 6pm – 9pm, there is entertainment and free buses from Warwick University to bring the students into town. If you would like to involve your business in some way please get in touch with us to discuss the options.

How to Get Involved:

Consider these ideas for making the most of this event:

- Email us a student offer to go on the RLS website in the ‘Student Life’ section. We will be welcoming students at the Warwick University Fresher’s days and pointing them to this website!
- Give us your flyers with student deals to go inside our ‘goodie bags’!
- Restaurants or bars - Do you have an offer to entice the students for a dink/meal after shopping? Let us know and we will shout about it!
- Clothes shops/shops catering to students - consider later opening;

Leamington Lantern Parade

When: Thursday 11th December

The Leamington Lantern Parade aims to ‘Light Up Leamington’ and ‘make the town centre a community centre’ at Christmas time. A number of partners, volunteers and sponsors in the town centre work together each year to deliver the workshop and final Lantern Parade in December and in previous years it has been featured on ITV News. Key contributors are the Community Arts Workshop (CAW) who provides artists, the Spa Centre & Family Tree who host workshops, CJ Events and the Police who help with the Parade and Warwickshire College, Warwick Uni who provide many volunteers to help with workshops and the Parade. In 2013 over 1000 lanterns were made by families in the town and 2000 people came into town to join the Parade. This year we have applied for funding from the Arts Council to support the event.

Please note, on Thursday 11th of December (which is a late night shopping night) there will be a road closure on the Parade from 5pm - 8pm.

How to Get Involved:

Consider these ideas for making the most of this event:

- Create the idea of ‘Lighting Up Leamington’ with a fabulous Christmas window display! The Chamber will be back with their Christmas Window Competition too.
- Creative? - if you have space consider running a lantern making workshop... we will provide the materials and do the promotion!
- Join us at the parade and give out samples or drinks. We can supply the hostess trays.
- Flyers or vouchers - give us some to distribute for you and make use of the captive family audience.

Please do give us a call to discuss your ideas - we are very open to new things and help you make the most out of this wonderful event.
Leamington
Golden Ticket

When: 16th November - 22nd December

The Golden Ticket promotion has proven to be one of our most successful initiatives to date and has recently been given national recognition. Last year we collected post code and other data from over 6000 entries. Over 1000 email addresses have also been utilized by ourselves and provided to other businesses to help guide their marketing. Last year 65 businesses kindly donated a prize and were featured on a website, in local advertising and on the 60,000 tickets printed.

THIS YEAR we have made a few changes based on your feedback. We would like to give away a prize a day throughout December - with a grand prize drawn on 22nd December. This way, we can promote the prizes businesses have donated and build excitement in a Christmas Advent Calendar as well as on social media every day.

The promotion will be launched on the 16th November to coincide with the Christmas Light Switch-on event allowing two extra weeks of Christmas shopping to be rewarded.

This promotion is a fantastic way to say ‘Thank You’ to customers for shopping in town.

How to Get Involved:

Consider these ideas for making the most of this event:

- If you would like to donate a prize please contact either Steph or Alison by 25th October. We will feature this on the website, on the Golden Tickets and in supporting advertising.
- Everyone can participate - customers can collect a ticket when they visit your shop. Have them on display or pop a ticket into their bag. Many were posted back to us last year. We will collate information from returned tickets and make this available for you to use in forthcoming marketing campaigns.

Love Leam

When: 14th February - 15th March 2015

Building on last February and once again 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 visitor 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 14th - 20th
Love Family: ‘Let’s Paint the Town Red’ (Half-term)

Week 2: February 21st - 28th
Love Leam: Love Everything Unique

Week 3: March 1st - 7th
Love Local Businesses: Business Networking Events

Week 4: March 8th - 15th
Love Colour: Fashion & Creative Showcase

Throughout the month there will be workshops, talks, activities and competitions - all designed to bring people into the town centre. The success of this month depends on as many businesses getting involved as possible - plus there is plenty of room to have a little fun with it!

For more info see the new dedicated website: www.loveleamington.com.
MARKETING, PROMOTIONS & ENHANCEMENT

Royal Leamington Spa Website

A new version of this very popular website has been launched and is now ‘responsive’. This means that when it is viewed on an apple of android phone it will appear more like an ‘App’. The website currently attracts 25,000 unique visitors per month.

Your business has its own unique listing and you can up-date it any time by emailing us the information you would like posted.

Make the Most of the RLS Website:

- Display up to 4 images of your business and use it to showcase new products. Please ensure they are ‘landscape’.
- Ensure that your profile is accurate and up-to date with the correct website and social media links to your own business sites.
- Advertise events, activities and special promotions and offers.
- Welcome the town’s student population with a student offer!

Love Leamington Website

Alongside the re-launch of the ‘Love Leam’ month, we will launch the ‘Love Leamington’ website which will become a community ‘hub’ for finding out about all things ‘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!

www.loveleamington.com

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.

Early next year 10,000 books will be distributed packed full of offers for April/May and an additional 15,000 in August to coincide with the International Bowls and Food & Drink Festival with offers up to 30th September.

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 April/May edition is 15th February 2015, the deadline for the August/September edition is 15th June 2015 so please email your offers to alison@bidleamington.com

Maps and Town Guides

Look out for some revised Royal Leamington Spa guide and maps in January.

These will be available to all retailers to give to customers and will also be distributed regionally.
BID ACTIVITIES REVIEW

Food & Drink Festival
When: 6th and 7th September

Once again the Leamington Food and Drink Festival was a huge success with record numbers of visitors to the Festival and around town. Many businesses who attended the Festival and also had businesses in town reported that their shops were very busy over the weekend as well.

A highlight of the show this year was the 'Home Cook of the Year' Competition where 4 local residents battled it out on the live kitchen under the watchful eye of guest judges Brian Turner and Andreas Antona.

With over 150 exhibitors, the Kids Make and Bake Cookery School, Masterclass Area and Live Cookery Kitchen showcasing some of Leamington’s finest chefs, Children’s Fun Fair and Face Painting along with live music from the bandstand there was something for everyone over the two days. Fifteen restaurants participated in the Taste Trail and over 1000 tasters were made available over the weekend tempting locals and visitors through their doors.

This year we covered the cost of the event through sponsorship and stall sales which is great news as it means there are more funds to invest in other BID activities throughout the year.

Please email alison@bidleamington.com to register your interest in taking part.

What You Said?

Town Centre Exhibitor Feedback:

I just wanted to pop an email over to say what a wonderful event it was at the weekend!

Jenny Hudson - Sweet As Cakes

Exhibitor Feedback:

Thanks for having me at this years event - it was fabulous - well organized and full of wonderful new customers! The fit with Warwick St Kitchen and the Ely Gin company was good as both are premium products. Well done to you all and the music on Sunday was beyond spectacular!

Sophie Browne - M’hencha

First of all let my thank you again for your excellent support – it really was a pleasure to work with you and your team! I’ve read the article in the newspaper saying that there were 25,000 visitors this year - congratulations, it shows you are on the right track!

Gerd & Sibylle Schäfer

Visitor Feedback:

Went along on Saturday, with kids! WE LOVED IT! Brilliant event, so well organised, clean and tidy, lots of happy people! Well done! Looking forward to next year’s already...

John Emmerson

Just wanted to say that this year’s Food Festival was fantastic. We spent two days with all our friends and our children and had a great weekend with lots of lovely food and entertainment. Thanks to all the litter pickers and CJ events.

Louise Jennings

My wife loves the Hamper that you put together, and a happy wife means a happy husband, so we thank you for that. I love the fact that the businesses in Leamington support you to generate growth in Leamington and long may that continue.

Regards, your Hamper winner. Robert Evans
BID ACTIVITIES REVIEW

Hanging Baskets!

250 hanging baskets have been on display throughout the summer. This year saw a change in the colour scheme which has received many positive comments from visitors and traders alike.

Please note that we try to spread the baskets evenly around the town and over the coming years they may change position to improve the overall impact. Also, due to the size and weight some buildings are not suitable due to health and safety testing. If you have any questions about the scheme, would like a basket moved or would like to be considered for having one, please do contact alison@bidleamington.com.

Please note that the number of baskets and relative positions are agreed in December each year.

Advertising & Promotions

Throughout the year we deliver a large amount of advertising and marketing to promote the town and its businesses. The primary objectives are to: stop leakage - to reach our local community and encourage them to shop local, and shop in town; reach our neighbours - remind them we are here and have a spectacular offer and; build loyalty - by fostering community spirit.

Throughout this time we have advertised across multiple platforms and focused on different sectors depending on the time of year. You will find the town promoted on billboards, in magazines, local papers and on the radio. We keep a record of all advertising and estimated EAV of PR generated so please get in touch if you would like to see copies.

BUSINESS SUPPORT & TRAINING

People Begging in the Town Centre - Are you killing with kindness?

The ‘Your Kindness Could Kill’ Campaign was launched in 2013. The aim is to remind the public that it is more beneficial to donate money to charities instead of giving it to individuals on the street. The reason is that money given to people begging is often used to buy drugs and alcohol, which helps keep them on the street and can ultimately kill them in the future. It also means that the town will get a reputation as a place where begging for money pays.

We are planning to give this Campaign a re-boost in October once the students have returned. Collectively efforts are also being made to address street drinking, which is linked to people begging. Together we must continue to use this platform to remind the town’s customers that 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.

UPDATES & NOTICES

Welcome New Businesses

We are always excited to welcome new businesses to the town. In the first half of 2014 we had a number of new businesses open including BAM Comics & Collectables, Chapter, Coffee Anarchist, Driftwood Home, Fable, Las Iguanas, Lulu’s Boutique, Larder in the Aviary Café, Louie Noir, Muffin Break, Paleo, The Beauty Rooms, The Royal Pug, Shou Shou, Thrills of the Emporium, Turtle Bay and Zou Bisou.

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.

Leamington Business Awards

This inaugural awards event is organised by a group of local business owners in the town and will be on Friday 17th October. Congratulations to all those who were nominated. For more information please visit their website: www.leamingtonbusinessawards.co.uk.