

Neighbourhood Plan Continuity Committee

Date:	25 September 2018
Title:	TCWG: Market Town Co-Ordinator Update
Contact Officer:	Becky Reid, Market Town Co-Ordinator

Purpose of Report

1. To provide an overview of the current focus of work and action taken since 14 August 2018.

Update

2. Town Centre Working Group

The Town Centre working group met last on 5 September 2018.

Supporting Existing Businesses

- 2.1. Monthly Businesses newsletter. Readership is now at 52 subscribers. A feature on various businesses around the town will be introduced in future editions.
- 2.2. The TCWG has decided not to carry on with Parking Surveys due to capacity. At present the information gained from them is not being used, except to communicate that there are spaces available, and this does not help parkers who are frustrated at being unable to find a space. Instead energy will be spent getting the parking signage updated by chasing OCC for promised action to be taken. Parking Surveys will be re-done closer to provide evidence for the development of our next NP, and to support re-development of the Cattle Market when needed.
- 2.3. Footfall data: we are still looking into footfall counters with Pentangle.
- 2.4. Town Centre listings in our Business Directory are now 41% complete. More work will be done to complete this by end of October.
- 2.5. 2 vacancies persist within our Town centre – previously Pearsons Insurance (Swan Walk), and Jayar Car Parts (near BP garage). DeWani Shahs has also recently changed hands. Delphine Art is now 'Woodworks Trading Ltd' with 'The W' café.
- 2.6. This year's Business Survey is now live. Responses are low (17 responses compared to last year's 74). This is despite visiting all businesses with a shop front. It will close end of September.
- 2.7. A new business network is launching in October. Thame Business Buzz will run on the first Thursday 10 – 12 at The Black Horse. £5 entry on the door.

Environment & Infrastructure

- 2.8. Kingdom Signs, our preferred Gateway signs provider has stopped offering installation. This means a new installer is being sought before this can progress. Planters to be progressed at a later date.

Partnership work

- 2.9. Town Centre Shopping Guide: This is almost complete. We will be handing to Chilternview to fill advertising space which will cover the printing costs of the artwork.
- 2.10. Thame edition of Revive & Thrive: Copy has been distributed to businesses in the Town centre with positive feedback. This is available to all Councillors.
- 2.11. 'Taste of Thame': no further progress at this time.
- 2.12. Thame Art Crawl has been taking up a significant amount of time. Thame Arts and Literature Festival are supportive and we have 12 venues and 21 artists committed. We also

have 6 events running over the course of 18-21 October. We are seeking volunteers who may help to run this event on behalf of 21stCT in the future.

2.13. 21stCT are needing to recruit a new Secretary, so please spread the word.

3. Town Centre Business Forum

3.1. The future of the Town Centre Business forum was being reviewed and following low attendance numbers at the meeting on 13 September 2018 the decision has been taken to pause this meeting for a while. Once the findings of the survey have been reviewed we will reconsider running it again, however if this happens it will be after elections in 2019.

4. Public Arts Working Group

4.1. The Public Arts Strategy has been drafted and approved by the TCWG on 5 September 2018. This is attached for approval by NPCC tonight. This outlines proposed projects in brief. Following approval, detailed briefs will be prepared by the PAWG, submitted to the TCWG to approve and commission. Implementation will then be by the PAWG, with support from the TCWG.

5. Visitor Economy Working Group

5.1. Adverts in Experience Oxfordshire, CDC Coach Handbook and Visit Buckinghamshire Group bookings leaflet are now in place.

5.2. Thame Players and Thame Museum have launched a joint survey with 266 respondents at time of writing. This is to determine how many people know about them and access them.

5.3. The proposal for a 'Living Advent Calendar', will be delayed until 2019 due to capacity. Focus on a Small Business Saturday Activity that will span the month of December will take priority instead.

6. Thame Markets

6.1. The Community Day ran on 21 August with great success.

6.2. Work is now being started to train traders to better promote themselves through Facebook.

7. Other

7.1. An infographic to help residents better understand the different responsibilities in various layers of council has been created and will shortly appear on our Website.

7.2. Our submission to the **Housing, Communities and Local Government Committee** for their High streets and town centres in 2030 inquiry has been published alongside the 77 other respondents: <https://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/housing-communities-and-local-government-committee/inquiries/parliament-2017/high-streets-and-town-centres-in-2030-inquiry-17-19/publications/> and has generated favourable comment.

Action Required: To note the report and approve the Public Arts Strategy at Agenda item 6, giving the TCWG permission to progress projects proposed in Section 10, within Budget to completion, in line with this Strategy.