

Neighbourhood Plan Continuity Committee

Date:	23 February 2021
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 12 January 2021.

Update

2. **Town Centre vibrancy & vitality: Town Centre Working Group (TCWG)**

Last met January 13 2021.

2.1. A provisional plan for the year was created subject to changes depending on how quickly the town re-opens following lifting of Covid restrictions. The group is using the current lockdown as a breathing space to evaluate Thame Town Centre against best practice provided by the Institute of Place Management, to identify gaps and possible action going forward.

2.2. Work has been started on a Business Training Course programme. This will seek to engage local businesses to provide (where possible) free training sessions to enable independent businesses to increase their resilience. The proposed structure will be based on findings from Small Business Britain and fall under the following headings:

- Digital Skills
- Customer Relations
- Financial Planning
- Give a little to get a little
- Mindset

This will be finalized at the next TCWG meeting.

2.3. Work on our new Town Map was delayed, but this should be finalised in time for the Information Centre re-opening.

3. **Partnership work with 21stCT**

3.1. A review of 21stCT constitution is underway with thought being given to whether or not the current structure is most appropriate.

3.2. Website updates will be completed whilst other projects are not able to go ahead, and as capacity allows.

4. **Other MTCO work**

4.1. Town Guide: a decision was made not to print this in 2021. We have many additional copies left of the 2019-20 Town Guide, and whilst dates are not relevant there is enough relevant information for this to continue being used. Work has gone into the creation of a rolling 4-year cycle of design, with each edition focusing on different elements of Thame life, to give different groups additional profile – helping our community know more about the opportunities on their doorsteps.

4.2. A Thame Treasure Trail was created as a partnership with Thame Museum as part of half term activity offers. Design work for this was supported by the Committee Services Officer.

- 4.3. A Monthly newsletter to benefit the businesses: still being delivered with 207 subscribers, up from 189 at last report.
- 4.4. Town Council Facebook page – followers are up to 1087 from 897 last report. This seems to be in response to regular vaccine updates being posted.

5. Visitor Economy Working Group (VEWG)

- 5.1. Meetings still on hold until further notice

6. Public Arts Working Group (PAWG)

- 6.1. Wayfinding Map is completed, and a meeting is scheduled with SODC Public Arts Officer to decide next steps on this project in late February. The expectation is that we will go out to tender for artists within the next 2 months. This was delayed due to slow response from SODC.

7. Thame Markets

- 7.1. Market continues to be supported to run safely.

Action Required:

To note this report.