

Neighbourhood Plan Continuity Committee

Date:	6 April 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 23 February 2021.

Update

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

Last met March 24 2021.

- 2.1. A Business Training Course programme was proposed to the local business community for their feedback. The proposal was to develop a range of free & paid for training sessions to enable independent businesses to increase their resilience – run by Thame businesses for Thame businesses. At time of writing this report, a very limited number of responses has been received suggesting that this is not something that is wanted at this time. Further work will be taken to try to garner some additional responses but if there is not a significant increase in responses this proposal will not be progressed.
- 2.2. Our new Town Map is complete and currently being printed with installation dates to be confirmed prior to April 12 2021
- 2.3. The TCWG are currently meeting fortnightly to evaluate Thame Town Centre against good practice guidelines to support town centres remain vital and viable, published by the High Street Task Force. Any action identified will be fed into the TCWG Action plan and progressed elsewhere as necessary.
- 2.4. A proposal for a Thame Businesses Awards is being explored. The hope is that this will be run by local businesses, supported by Thame Town Council through the work of the MTCO. The aim of the awards will be to:
 - To celebrate local achievement in businesses
 - To raise awareness of good practice within Thame Businesses
 - To build a business community
 - To encourage collaboration between businesses.
 - Specific focus on celebrating the SMEs and Independent businesses in Thame, whilst engaging the larger businesses
 - Increase attraction of doing business in Thame.

The idea is initially being scoped with possible partners and will then be consulted on with the business community before being progressed.

3. **Partnership work with 21stCT**

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

4. Other MTCO work

- 4.1. Thame Outer Circuit: publication and promotion of an online version of this walk has been coordinated with the support of Committee Services Officer. Now working on creation of Waymarkers for this route
- 4.2. Thame Inner Circuit: publication of an online version of this walk has been coordinated with the support of Committee Services Officer.
- 4.3. A Monthly newsletter to benefit the businesses: still being delivered with 227 subscribers, up from 207 at last report.
- 4.4. Town Council Facebook page – followers are up to 1154 up from 1087 last report.
- 4.5. Coordination of application for road closure for World Village Market, due to attend town in May.

5. Visitor Economy Working Group (VEWG)

- 5.1. A new Thame flyer has been designed and approved. Waiting for one addition of an updated town centre map and then it will go to print to be installed in Montesson Sq and the Information Centre (alongside Responsibilities graphic and newly designed guide for Thame Walks)
- 5.2. Midsomer Murder flyers and posters have been updated/designed respectively and have gone to print to be ready for the launch of this year's season in April.
- 5.3. New 'Thame' leaflet holders will be created to promote the town in surrounding areas to encourage stay-cationers to the town.

6. Public Arts Working Group (PAWG)

- 6.1. Artists brief is completed and out to tender until May. Shortlisting will take place with PAWG, with a smaller panel awarding the final contract/s. Implementation will be coordinated through the PAWG..

7. Thame Markets

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

Action Required:

To note this report.