

City Centre matters

The newsletter of the Wolverhampton City Centre Company

City Centre Manager's Update

The spring is a time to look forward and the **City Centre Company** has much to look forward to following an independent review by the City Council which has confirmed its continued support. Recommendations as to ways to refresh our governance and the work we do will see a lot of beneficial changes.

Income generation is the key to sustainability in the short to medium term, whilst the local authority and city centre businesses decide if a **Business Improvement District (BID)** is the right route.

For further information about what a **BID** is, see the article on page 3.

See www.wolverhamptonccc.co.uk for details of our work and what is happening in the city centre.



Kim Gilmour

City Retailers Meetings

Retailers are invited to come along to monthly meetings on the **second Tuesday** of every month at 3pm in the 5th Floor Management Suite of Mander House. This group, formed at the end of 2009, has now expanded to include not just high street stores but independents, markets representatives, shopping centre managers and many more.

The meetings are intended to assist two-way communication so the **City Centre Company** can inform retailers about key issues and events and take back any feedback to our partners including the **local authority**. It is also an opportunity to meet other retailers and discuss common issues such as footfall and sales.

For more information contact Marianne Carter on 01902 551077 or wccc@wolverhamptonccc.co.uk

Retailers Meeting dates for 2011

March 8th	August 9th
April 12th	September 13th
May 10th	October 11th
June 14th	November 8th
July 12th	December 13th



Eat Guide 2011

SUCCESS SEES RE-LAUNCH OF EAT GUIDE

Following the success of the first official dining out guide for the city, **Eat in Wolverhampton 2011** edition will be launched at the end of February. The guide, produced by **City Centre Company** and **Tourism & Development** at the local authority, showcases the best places to lunch, snack, take afternoon tea or wine and dine in the city centre and its outskirts.

A total of 15,000 copies of the new brochure will be distributed throughout the city and in addition is available online - the 2010 issue had around 8,000 unique downloads. An audio version is also available in CD format or MP3 download.

Discount vouchers within the booklet include great offers such as £5 off meals for two, 10% off total bill, coffee & cake deals, and 2 main meals & bottle of wine for £14! **How can you fail to be tempted?**

Be sure to pick up your new Guide at bars, restaurants and attractions across the city or download at:

www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/foodanddrink

Keep up-to-date on all that's going on within the city centre at www.wolverhamptonccc.co.uk





Getting the message home with advice for revellers

Working together for a safer Christmas and New Year

The **Keep It Safe** campaign has successfully completed a **third year** of making the city centre a safer place to visit during the evening.

With the extra visibility of **police officers** patrolling, the use of the **Safe Haven** at **Epic Youth Cafe**, Lichfield Street as a temporary minor injuries clinic and to provide somewhere warm to wait for a taxi, these were just a few of the extra facilities available to the public during the festive season.

City visitors during the run up to Xmas and New Year would have seen the KiS Safety Stewards managing the taxi rank on Market Street; this was to increase feelings of safety and reassurance for the public during the early hours when there are large numbers waiting for a taxi home and visiting food outlets in this area.

The campaign was hugely supported by all agencies to include the **Primary Care Trust, British Red Cross, West Midlands Police, Wolverhampton City Council, City Centre Company, the licensed venues** and their **Security Officers**; volunteering **Street Pastors** were on hand to give advice, signpost people to taxi ranks and the medical triage, and for the few unfortunate females that also needed to relieve their tired feet of high heels, there were flip flops on hand.

CHRISTMAS OPERATION HALVES SHOP THEFTS

An operation to tackle the seasonal rise in crime over the festive season has cut the number of shop thefts in **Wolverhampton City Centre** by 50%.

Although there is usually a spike in the number of shoplifting offences during December, last Christmas actually saw this figure fall to half of that in November.

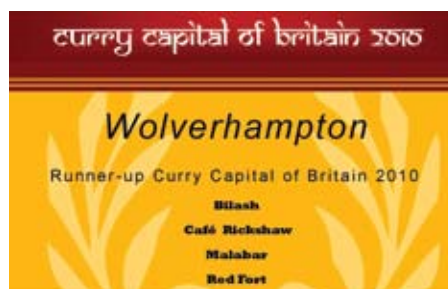
Operation Christmas Cracker also saw vehicle crime offences fall significantly throughout December.

Acting Inspector Steve Edwards, from the City Centre neighbourhood policing team, said: "Every year we put a number of measures in place to disrupt, detect and deter any potential criminal activity. As part of **Christmas Cracker** we worked alongside shoppers and retailers to raise awareness of crime and carried out targeted, high visibility patrols.

"We also worked with our partners on the **Keep It Safe** campaign which helped us reduce the amount of anti-social behaviour in the city centre to its lowest level in four years.

"These figures prove that if organisations like **Wolverhampton Police** and **Wolverhampton City Centre Company** work in partnership with businesses and visitors we can have a serious impact on reducing the level of crime in our city."

City crowned 3rd in Curry Capital Competition



Wolverhampton can hold its head high after coming a more-than-respectable third in the **Curry Capital of Britain 2010** competition, to winners Glasgow and second-place Bradford. In its first year of entering the contest the city's Indian restaurants, helped by the **City Centre Company** and **City Council**, won high

commendations from the organisers **Grove International**.

Peter Grove commented: "The 13 experienced judges from all round the country wish it to be known that their job was made very difficult due to the very high standard of team restaurants and general competition this year... newcomers **Wolverhampton** deserve special mention for a tremendous first time showing."

Diners were encouraged to back Wolverhampton in a public vote while four restaurants in the city - **Bilash, Red Fort, Cafe Rickshaw** and **Malabar** - were selected by members of the public to form Wolverhampton's bid 'team'. Each was visited in secret by a judge who assessed the standard of food, service,

hygiene and cleanliness, while the restaurants organised charity events in aid of **The Curry Tree**, a charitable fund set up to help the poor and undernourished of the world.

Sam Hussain, owner of **Café Rickshaw**, said: "It was thoroughly enjoyable to be part of the Wolverhampton's bid team. What started out as a bit of fun turned in to a real business opportunity to raise the profile of Indian cuisine and eating out generally in our city. We look forward to further opportunities to work together promoting eating out in Wolverhampton and are already gearing up for the competition next year."

So the challenge is now on for the 2011 competition where **Wolverhampton** will aim to improve and become crowned Curry Capital outright.



PRINCE ALBERT WATCHES FAN-FRENZY IN QUEEN SQUARE

Simon Cowell with One Direction (photo courtesy of Beacon Radio)

A bitterly cold night in early December did not deter thousands of devoted fans from cheering on X-Factor finalists One Direction in Queen Square.

Bushbury's most famous son, 17-year old Liam Payne and his four band mates played to a crowd of over 3,000 watched by mentor Simon Cowell. **Prince Albert** had a bird's eye view of the band's performance on stage, which was hosted by **Beacon Radio**, and so did the **City Centre Company** team who watched from the warmth of their offices. The home-coming clip was shown during the Saturday night finals show and the Square looked wonderful - Wolverhampton people did their city proud in what were sub-zero temperatures.

Beatties' Board Room was used by the visitors as their Green Room, and Simon caused quite a stir amongst the Beatties staff as the band and their entourage admired the store on their way through. The **Civic Hall's Outdoor Events Team** deserve praise for doing a wonderful job at short notice in organising the smooth running of the night and the swift cleaning-up operation afterwards. The band is now part of the X-Factor national tour which kicked off this month in Birmingham's LG Arena.



Rugby Rangers offer help and support to businesses and the public

What is a BID?

Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) are now well established in many city centres, so what is a **BID**, what are the benefits and is it right for **Wolverhampton**?

A **BID** is a precisely defined area where ratepayers have voted to pay collectively for improvements - in addition to those delivered by their local council. Most **BIDs** are run as not-for-profit organisations which manage projects such as additional street cleaning, uniformed rangers or hosts, marketing and events to improve footfall and the vitality of a city centre.

These projects and services are agreed locally by businesses, detailed in a business plan and monitored. By collectively investing in the city centre we could:

Improve the quality of life for residents, businesses and visitors

Attract inward investment, economic growth and improve capital value

Increase footfall, consumer spend and profits for businesses

Reduce crime and costs of crime

There are now 100 established **BIDs** including **Rugby**, **Solihull** and **Birmingham** and all early **BIDs** have successfully secured a second term.

The next stage in **Wolverhampton** is to find some seed corn funding to set up a feasibility study and engage with businesses. This could lead to a **BID Director** being appointed and a business board set up with a vote for change in around 18 to 24 months time.

Danish Waterbed Company Comes to City



Akva

The UK office of **Akva**, Europe's largest manufacturer of high quality **waterbeds** is to relocate to Wolverhampton and open a new showroom

Mark Dyson, UK Sales Director said **Wolverhampton** was the best place in the Midlands to run the business from because of its location, transport links and the helpfulness of local agencies. The three storey property in **School Street** will become the UK sales, training and distribution centre as well as the 'Let's Go 2 Bed' showroom for waterbeds and accessories.

Commenting on the move, which comes 18 years after the company was established in **Southend-on-Sea**, Mark Dyson said: "As the business has grown it has become vital for us to find a West Midlands location to serve our growing

customer base and dealership network. We looked at several locations including **Birmingham** but **Wolverhampton** was a much better proposition because it has good access to the shire counties and we were able to quickly locate the ideal property with the help of **Wolverhampton City Centre Company** and the **Economic Development Unit of Wolverhampton City Council**."

Kim Gilmour said: "I am delighted to welcome **Mark** and **Steve Wilkinson**, the new Manager, to the city centre, particularly as the relocation will create business for the local economy. **Mark** has also demonstrated his willingness to support the local community through sourcing locally, employing local people and getting involved with various good causes."

What's New!

Markies - free-style barbers on the corner of Lichfield Street and Fryer Street.

Intricut Crafts - this craft shop in Farmers Fold stocks crafting supplies for scrapbooking and card-making, handmade cards and invitations.

Oh No It Isn't - Oh Yes It Is! - This year's pantomime has been announced by the Grand Theatre and will see Linda Lusardi and Sam Kane returning to the city to star in **Snow White**.

Love Fashion - new ladies clothing shop in the Wulfrun Centre catering for sizes 12 to 32.

Rachael Heyhoe Flint - the Wolves vice-president has proudly taken her seat in the House of Lords as Baroness Heyhoe Flint of Wolverhampton.

Chilli Fry Balti - call in after a night out in the city at this great little restaurant in St. Georges Parade (formerly The Ship)

Delicious - students are loving this café snack bar in Lichfield Street just below the new student accommodation.

CityStyle 2011 - after the success of last year's event, CityStyle 2011 will be back on 24th September in the Wulfrun Centre Piazza.

Foods 4 Thought - this newly licensed convenience store on Broad Street is open until midnight six days a week.

Kid's Kabin - has renamed and relocated from the Wulfrun Centre to the corner of Cleveland Street and Bell Street.



Wolverhampton in Bloom

After the City reclaimed its prestigious gold award last year, plans are well underway for **Wolverhampton in Bloom 2011**. The project aims to involve all of the community - with events, competitions for individuals, schools and businesses and community clean-up projects.

Find out more at www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/florality

What's on Where

The next issue covering council supported live music, film, theatre, art, workshops, family/outdoor events and sports events from April to June will be available from end of March - call 01902 551069 or email whatsonwhere@wolverhampton.gov.uk for a copy.

What's Going On

Fair Trade Fortnight

28th February to 13th March

Wolverhampton is a **Fairtrade city**

and to celebrate **Fairtrade**

Fortnight, there will be a range of events

and activities in and around the city

promoting the importance of buying

Fairtrade. **Learn more by visiting**

www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/fairtrade



St George's Day - Saturday 23rd April 11am-3pm

Wolverhampton's **St. George's Day Celebrations** will see street entertainers, dragon puppets and a brass band providing fun-filled entertainment in **Queen Square**. Popular vocalist Kristen Sweet will serenade the public with patriotic songs to celebrate England's Patron Saint. For more information see www.wolvescivic.co.uk



For further information contact:

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Wolverhampton City Centre Company Tel: **01902 551077**

Email: wccc@wolverhamptonccc.co.uk or visit: www.wolverhamptonccc.co.uk

Wolverhampton City Centre Company is an independent, proactive organisation working strategically and operationally with partners to identify and address key issues to improve the marketing, environment, safety and economy of the City Centre. Through a Board and our Stakeholder Groups, WCCC works with a large number of private businesses representing the 'Voice of the City Centre'.

WCCC is funded by the public and private sector including Wolverhampton City Council, the Mander and Wulfrun Centres, Hortons' Estate, National Express, Sainsbury's, Boots and the University of Wolverhampton.