



Kim Gilmour

City Centre Manager's Update

The last 18 months has seen quite a lot of disruption in the city centre as the new bus station development takes place, but now the new glass bridge linking the bus and rail station heralds the near completion of this mammoth task. We look forward to Interchange opening in July.

Elsewhere it is encouraging to see the city centre taking a higher priority within the emerging **City Strategy** and the **City Centre Area Action Plan**. The **City Centre Company** through its Board and Stakeholder Groups will be contributing to all the consultations to ensure that the views of businesses and shoppers are taken into account.

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



No. 500 bus

Reduced parking fees and free bus for city centre

City centre car parking charges have been reduced at the majority of council owned car parks, which is good news for all city shoppers, workers and night-time visitors.

Short stay daytime charges on inner ring road car parks have generally been dropped by at least 20p per hour, with 50p reductions on longer stays. Evening charges on all car parks (with the exception of the Civic Centre) have been reduced by 50p to £2.00 for parking after 6.00pm.

The biggest daytime reductions have been on **Oxford Street** and **Church Lane** car parks in a bid to encourage people to park on the outskirts of the city, where all day parking will now cost just £2.00. Season ticket holders will also benefit on these two sites, as reductions of £35 per quarter equal an amazing saving of £140.00 a year.

The council have also re-instated the **Number 500 free bus** to ferry passengers around the city from Pipers Row, stopping in Lichfield Street, Darlington Street, Salop Street, Pitt Street, Cleveland Street and finally Bilston Street. The service operates on Market days - **Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday** - from 9.40am to 2.30pm.

The bus, a modern, low floor easy-access bus, can accommodate wheelchairs, shopping trolleys, pushchairs and buggies. Early indications are that the market has seen an increase in attendance figures and businesses in the area are encouraged by the Council's decisions on both this and the parking charges.

CITY CENTRE OPPORTUNITIES

Whilst large scale developments may be taking a back seat nationally, now is the time to get the planning right and the city centre is at the heart of three key pieces of work.

Firstly, the city centre has emerged as a key priority within the **City Strategy** which looks ahead to 2026 and aims to achieve 'opportunity for all'. Secondly there is a lot of work going on around the **City Centre Area Action Plan (AAP)** including major studies on development sites, parking and transport. Thirdly the **City Council** is considering major retail opportunities ahead of the AAP in the light of new developments proposed by **Sainsbury's** and **Tesco's** on the edge of the city centre and the end of **Summer Row**.

Our own **City Centre HealthCheck** reveals people want more choice, more restaurants and pubs for families or a slightly older age group, and more events to promote community cohesion and that feel good factor. **WCCC** will also have a new role going forward in managing city centre space and working with partners to attract new retail and leisure investment.

So there are endless opportunities when the economy picks up for the city centre to attract new investment fitting for a city of 250,000 people. If you want further information on any of these studies please contact Kim Gilmour on 01902 551077.

Keeping the city safe and enjoyable



When the days get warmer the number of complaints to **Wolverhampton Police** about anti-social behaviour in the city centre start to increase. Concerns have already been raised about this sort of activity taking place in the market area and St Peter's gardens.

Sergeant Steve Edwards said:

"Unfortunately we see the same few individuals spoiling the city centre for everyone else. We have been successful over previous years in stopping this type of anti-social activity and we will be doing everything in our power this summer to do the same again."

Officers will be using **Section 27**

Dispersal Orders to tackle the problem, a piece of legislation which allows police to direct people to leave an area if it is suspected they may go on to cause alcohol related crime and disorder.

At the time of writing, City Centre officers have issued 57 Section 27 'direction to leave' notices since the start of February. Officers will also be looking to apply for **anti-social behaviour orders (ASBOs)** for persistent offenders.

If anyone who lives or works in the city centre has any concerns about anti-social behaviour they are encouraged to contact officers on 0345 113 5000 or by emailing: wolves_city@west-midlands.pnn.police.uk.

See Something - Say Something

While the public transport network is already very safe, **The Safer Travel Partnership** works to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour on **Bus, Rail and Metro**.

Safer Travel is made up of **Centro, West Midlands Police, British Transport Police, National Express** and the **Safer Birmingham Partnership**. In addition to patrols on the network, the partnership work within the community to reassure and give advice to passengers.

You can help the partnership to know when and where anti-social behaviour is taking place on the bus or metro by texting **"bus"** or **"metro"** to **83010**. It is essential to use the key words **"bus"** or **"metro"** for the text to be received.

You can help yourself by:

Keep valuables like mobile phones, cash and jewellery out of sight.

Keep keys separate from anything with your address on it.

Check your bus route and destination before you set off.

Pickpockets love crowds so keep bags to the front, closed with the fastening towards the body, be particularly careful with rucksacks.

Register valuable mobile equipment like mobile phones, mp3 players, iPods and laptops at www.immobilise.com. This could make it easier to recover them if stolen or lost.

Be discreet when using your mobile phone.

For further information visit www.safertravel.info or www.facebook.com/safertravelpolice



Rachael Heyhoe Flint given Freedom of Wolverhampton



Rachael Heyhoe Flint posing with the freedom scroll and Lance Corporal Derby (image courtesy of WCC)

Sporting heroine, tireless charity fundraiser and proud Wulfrunian **Baroness Rachael Heyhoe Flint OBE** was given the freedom of the city of Wolverhampton at a special ceremony in St Peter's Square.

Accompanying her was **Lance Corporal Derby** - a very large and impressive ram who is the mascot of the **Mercian Regiment**. This symbolised the fact that in days gone by, those given freedom of the city were entitled to drive sheep and cattle through the city centre.

Baroness Heyhoe Flint was presented with a scroll and casket by the **Mayor, Councillor Malcolm Gwinnett** in recognition of her *"eminent services to the city, to sport and to public relations."*



Kim Gilmour presents Shamin Ahmed and Sam Hussain of Café Rickshaw with their Curry Capital Certificate

Bid to win Curry Capital title 2011

After the amazing feat of coming third in the first year of entering, Wolverhampton will be aiming high in the **Curry Capital of Britain Competition 2011**.

Preparations are under way to make this year's entry bigger and better, with **WCCC** and **Tourism & Development** at the **City Council** raising awareness of the competition initially to encourage voting for the individual restaurants, which begins on 1st July. Nominations should be emailed to groveint@aol.com.

The top four voted-for restaurants will go on to form the team who will represent the city - these will be judged by mystery diners, participate in charity events for **'The Curry Tree'** charity and be part of the all-important dossier submitted by WCCC and Tourism.

Look out for events around the city including a poppadom stacking contest, write a curry poem competition and events at individual restaurants.

For more information visit www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/foodanddrink

Fashion show returns to City



The stage is set for the return of **CityStyle** to the city's shopping centres. Put the **24th of September** in your diaries as a date not to forget, when the **Mander and Wolfrun Centres** will be bejazzled with catwalk fashion shows, beauty and hair demonstrations and giveaways following on from the success of the 2010 event.

High street retailers including **House of Fraser**, **Wallis** and **Peacocks** will be providing fashions from their autumn range, with tips and consultations from beauty houses and hair demonstrations from top stylists Francesco Group and Ultimate Hairdressing.

If you are a city fashion or beauty business and would like to be part of the event please contact Marianne on wccc@wolverhamptonccc.co.uk or call 01902 551077.



NEW CHAIR HERALDS NEW ERA FOR CITY CENTRE COMPANY BOARD

Peter Cutchie, Chief Executive of the Grand Theatre, is heading up an enlarged and revitalised City Centre Company Board.

Peter was recently elected at the Company's AGM and brings a wealth of knowledge and experience gained

from other cities and an understanding of the dynamic of the city centre from the perspective of both the daytime and night time economy.

Following the review of **WCCC** by the **City Council**, recommendations to increase board representation have taken place and we now welcome new board members from independent retailers, property, business, leisure, food, hospitality, security, more key retailers and a resident. Our first full board meeting takes place on 16th June.

If you wish to make contact with a board member representing your sector or wish to get involved in our stakeholder groups covering, safety, access and the environment, food and drink, marketing or retail, please do let us know.

Security Champions Help Reduce Crime



Security Champions with WCCC Project Officer Lucy Bickley and Warden Anne Allen

Wolverhampton City Centre Company (WCCC) is working in partnership with a number of key retailers to empower **Security Officers**, **Store Detectives** and **Loss Prevention Officers**, encouraging them to work more closely together sharing information and intelligence to improve the safety of the city centre.

The Security Champion's role is to be more visible and more supportive to other businesses by responding to calls over the **CitySafe Radio Link**.

WCCC, with the support of the **Security Champions**, has now produced 12 **Target Books** which identify active criminals operating within the city centre. The books are provided to all businesses signed up to **CitySafe**, the Business Crime Partnership managed by WCCC.

An innovative training package around conflict resolution and communication has also been developed by WCCC which is aimed at the **Security Champions**. Participants will develop different methods of dealing with crime and anti-social behaviour which helps reduce stock losses and time spent, which will benefit both businesses and **West Midlands Police**.

As the role develops, WCCC will be looking to award a badge so that Security Champions will be more recognisable within the city centre.

What's New!

La Salsa – fantastic new Mexican restaurant in Stafford Street. A great place to lunch, dine or drink with friends.

Wolverhampton Magazine - stylish monthly lifestyle published by the Express & Star with interviews, features, travel and property items.

Laptop Repair Centre - newly opened in Broad Street, also repairs PC consoles.

Gold=Cash - take along your unwanted gold jewellery to this new Queen Square business.

Smith & Dawson - a new location in King Street for this Solicitors office.

Gymphobics - a big fit welcome to new owner Vicky Meyer at this Clarence Street gym.

Events Boutique - event design and planning for your special occasion as this King Street boutique, plus gorgeous party favours, cards, balloons and much more.

* 24 * - the Express and Star's new digital service bringing news on the move to smartphones and iPads.

Ultimate Hairdressing - congratulations to Sam and team on the re-launch (formerly Zaks) in Hampton Walk.

Beacon Walk of the Black Country 19th June

Beacon Radio has teamed up with the University of Wolverhampton to bring you the Walk of the Black Country - a 10-mile walk in aid of Promise Dreams, with a percentage of funds also going to the Dudley and Wolverhampton Mayoral charities. The walk starts at Himley Hall, Dudley and ends at Wolverhampton Race Course. Sign up for this great fund raising event at www.beaconradio.co.uk.

Wolverhampton in Bloom Judging 14th July

Judging day in the city is July 14th so if Wolverhampton is to hold onto its Gold award can we ask all businesses in the city to take a look outside the front of their properties and give it the once-over so all is spick and span for the day. Find out more at www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/floralcity



What's Going On

Steam & Vintage Rally West Park 4th June

Fine display of traction engines, motor cycles and stationary engines from times gone by; also giant modern and vintage fun fairs, trade stalls and craft marquee.

Wolverhampton Show West Park 9th & 10th July

Free family fun with fun fair, large inflatable slide, stalls, monster trucks, devil's horsemen and royal artillery.



Wolvestock 17 East Park 23rd & 24th July

The 17th year for this free country music festival featuring Swing Commanders, Henry Smith's Country Dreams, Diablos, Hayley Oliver and World Champion Line-dancer Rob Fowler.

What's on Where

The new issue covering council supported live music, film, theatre, art, workshops, family/outdoor events and sports events from July to September will be available from 1st July from Emma Cleary (01902 551069 or emma.cleary@wolverhampton.gov.uk) or see www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/whatson

Just a few of the Highlights

Kasabian - Civic Hall 7th June

Don't Stop Believing - Arena Theatre 18th & 19th June

Home of Metal: You Should be Living - Art Gallery 18th June to 11th September

Footloose - Grand Theatre 20th to 25th June

Black Country Stories by Martin Parr - Light House Media Centre 1st July to 30th September

Grimethorpe Colliery Band - Grand Theatre 10th July

The Woman in White - Grand Theatre 19th to 23rd July

Judas Priest - Epitaph Tour 2011 - Civic Hall 21st July

Everybody Dance Now - Central Youth Theatre - Arena Theatre 1st to 5th August

Average White Band - Slade Rooms 25th August

For full details see www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/whatson



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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.