

Wokingham Town Centre Workshop: 25 October 2017

Marketing Discussion

Feel of town	Wokingham USP
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community • Family Oriented • Character • Safe • Happy (happy people spend more) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unique/Niche retailers • Independent shops • Choice and variety • Evening economy • Café culture and pub culture • Markets • Events

Marketing Ideas

Topic	Ideas
Co-ordinated approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appoint a professional marketing company to manage across town • Single marketing plan for all to feed into
Social media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a primary feed for promoting Wokingham (too many different feeds dilute messages) • Increased use of social media in a co-ordinated manner (e.g. use a specific # to link it all together regardless of business)
Co-ordinated offers (with as many retailers as possible involved)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target specific days e.g. Wonderful Wednesdays (all retailers offer some sort of offer/discount and free parking etc) • Double parking ticket where one half is torn off to get a discount in certain shops e.g. spend over £X get X% off • 24/7 Free parking • Treasure hunts / competitions • Balloon burst voucher/prize offer
Loyalty Schemes (free gifts or special offers)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swipii points card • Shop local stamp card • Pub Crawl challenge
Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extend opening hours to harness late night economy • Twilight Markets • Christmas Shopping evening • Digger day / works open day • Father Christmas / Santas grotto • Pop up shops / Markets • Window dressing for special occasions
Entertainment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extend Sunny Saturdays with free entertainment across year • Buskers
Advertising and signage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear signage across town • Advertising signs on approach to town centre (not just once there) with the opportunity to be sponsored by businesses • Interactive signs around town centre • Town map showing where retailers are located • Improved car park signage and awareness of where they are located coming into the town • Advertising of individual businesses not just 'Wokingham'

Project Discussion

Issues	Suggestions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noise levels • Dust into businesses [Dawnus site] • Dawnus site is clean but Rose Street is not • Traffic flows in Peach Street • Reading Road : roadworks unfinished • Deliveries into Market Place • Pedestrian routes on Rose Street very narrow adjacent to traffic • Pedestrian signage needs improving • Cannot see Bush Walk clearly • Signs can often point the wrong way • Temporary tarmac already breaking up • Uniformity/consistency of size/height of fencing • Issues regarding clarity of loading areas etc when complete [do not want return to old practices] • Lack of signage for main car parks • Unhappy with £1 evening parking • How quickly can WBC complete the 'infill' areas between the current projects? What should the level of quality be for these areas? • The Crispin's back gate – what will the position be when Elms Field completed? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refuse collections Market Place better comms. Possibility of aligning collections • Traffic – calming on Rose Street? • Better communication about detail of future work : clearer plan • Signage – arrows at eye level/ Colour-coded 'footprints' • Communicate signage [zones] for loading/unloading • Reassure pedestrians that the outcome is not a 'shared surface' [approach] • Maps with shops/toilets etc for regenerated town, 'You are here' – shops allocated on map • More 30 minute parking • Need to look to extending free [parking] offer beyond 3pm if not brought in • Car parks all need 'pay on exit' • Support to keep Luckley Path closed permanently • Banners • Delivery Bay at top of Peach Street • Driver information signs – indicate other car parks • Temporary Rose Street traffic lights - pedestrian control requested

Communication Discussion

Topic	Ideas / Suggestions / Comments
<p>Market Place Project newsletter</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informative • Frequency is right. Issue it at the same time of the month so people know when to expect it • Wokingham Business Association to act as a conduit • Short & individual newsletters (Rather than focus on whole town) are better – don't want update all in one as would be too long

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retailers requested extra copies so they can hand out to customers / residents • Content: include information on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Parking ○ Buses and bus stops ○ Progress chart / timeline / information on programme delay (if applicable and tell retailers why if there is any slippage)
Key information want to know	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specifics on support available from Wokingham Borough Council • More details on localised changes for example need to know in good time if access to businesses is going to be affected • A big map showing which roads are closed / when they open would be beneficial for visitors / residents
Messaging and communication tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep communication and facts simple – manage the rumour of what’s happening in town, by when and how it affects retailers • Schedule of works – Produce a fortnightly newsletter outlining what’s happening / when in the next few weeks • Weekly video also suggested with a talking head from Balfour Beatty to talk about timescales, what’s happening in the next week, and any delays explained • Engage with other business / community groups who can share the messages for you e.g Wokingham Positive Difference. They can help with two-way communication • Simple messaging – similar to In Focus (Liberal Democrat newsletter) • Use Community boards in Tescos and/or Waitrose • Advertising local business events including an online directory • Question raised around what the Council’s do to promote the town to wider Borough • Request to see a health and safety person around the area • Increase awareness of roadworks.org • Use Hyper-local magazines including Wokingham Word & Round and About. Use for messaging and advertise events.
Timing on car park proposal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3pm is not the right time • All day would be a better proposal • A few hours in the morning would also be better as can be more footfall in the morning after school runs and before lunchtime
Signage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Needs improving • Better signposting to car park and availability of spaces • Big screen with key messages such as new layout ahead • Apps • Newsletter on windows in shop – or something they can put in the window to update customers on current work
Regeneration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good idea but concerned about the present disruption and impact on the town • Need to get shop offer right in the future • Communicate the Unique Selling Point (USP) / the destination town offer and engage businesses with this • Link communications such as opening Peach Place with The Bradbury Centre, keep them informed. Question raised whether all shops will open at once at Peach Place, or will it be a phased approach. Will it be big bang or not?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• More information about what the Council's strategic plan is to fill the units. More information about what shops are coming in the future• Retailers expressed a need to feel that's its worth putting up with the pain for the end result• Rose Street taking too long – could be done quicker but the Council chooses not to
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