

# **BEXLEYHEATH** *News* Business Improvement District

Members news from Bexleyheath BID

## Introduction

2017 is proving to be a year of change. While we have seen many positives in the changing face of the high street - we are aware of some difficult trading periods this year. With the final phases of the Bexleyheath Town Centre Regeneration scheme well underway, rate revaluations, and interchangeable weather, all leading to some uncertainty.

The BID has delivered seven training courses to date this year of which is easing some of the financial burdens of staff development while resulting in a better quality of staff. Courses have included First Aid, Health & Safety and Terrorism awareness sessions resulting in a total savings ratio of £1:£4 to our members. The next training session will take place on 20th September and has some spaces remaining.

Further savings have been found through our joint procurement scheme in partnership with Meercat Associates. With the water deregulation and other new service areas, we continue to find savings. To date, we have identified nearly £80,000 in potential savings. If you wish to see how we can further help your business, then please get in touch.

During spring we were delighted to receive recognition of our efforts over the past year by being a finalist in the 'Marketing & Social Media' category while going on to be highly commended for our 'Commitment to the Community' in the Bexley Business



Awards. Our praise also goes out to Flutterbyes and Broadway Jewellers for being highly commended in the 'independent retailer' and 'marketing & social media' categories respectively.

We have some exciting plans for the remainder of the year and look forward to working on more projects with you all over the coming months. Some highlights include our annual Poppy Appeal Launch event, our first 'loyalty and reward App', and last but not least Christmas of which you will hear more about in this newsletter.

Welcome to  
new  
businesses

**Magnet**



## Easter



Easter was the first collaborated event with Broadway Shopping Centre and marked a start of greater things to come from the BID and shopping centre.

In addition to the usual Easter weekend activities, we launched an expanded Easter trail. This trail booklet incorporated businesses in and out of the shopping centre encompassing all that Bexleyheath has to offer. This year's booklet had activities to undertake while finding clues around the town and was distributed to c2,500 young families over the two week period.

Footfall figures were up year on year, with a 2.9% rise over the same two week Easter period in 2016. In addition to the increase in footfall, we also saw an improved reach via social media with a 2000 desktop increase to nearly 9000 people over the same period last year.

Some further improvements have been identified, and work is underway ready for next year.

## Armed Forces Weekend

Again in its second year, we showed our support to our country's armed forces while celebrating our local civic & uniformed services.

This two-day event took place at the end of June with support from the MOD, local authority, Police and CRAY group. Participants in the event got to showcase some of the great histories that this town and borough has to offer while driving footfall to the town and further adding to our 'place' marketing plan.

Activities included creations for a (later to be produced) short animated movie, re-enactments, musical entertainment, and much more. This entertainment was further supported by current and ex-servicemen along with some retired military vehicles.

Additional income was generated for the event with a 100% increase on last year, footfall was up 7.57% year



on year, and our reach on social media was also up 100% to 24,000 desktops. Our website and social media marketing were also supported with lots of local press coverage and on-street posters across the borough.

## Car Show

For the second year running, we held a car show in Bexleyheath. Local manufacturer dealerships supported the event, but the main attraction was the replica movie cars.

Lightning McQueen proved a star attraction and had families awaiting his arrival.

This event had great press coverage locally and added to Bexleyheath's presence as a destination of choice.

Furthermore adding to the value that BID brings to Bexleyheath by way of not only press coverage but a strong social media and on street presence.

This year's event was a step up on last year while costing much less. Highlights of the success include social media reach of nearly 60,000 desktops and a 2.8% increase in weekly footfall.

While year on year footfall was marginally down, the event proves to be successful as stats from the same weekend two years ago as well as the weekends before and after are significantly fewer than that of the last two years when the event has run.



# On the horizon for Bexleyheath...

## Broadway Roof Fest

This August bank holiday weekend will be the second of our collaborative events with Broadway Shopping Centre. This 'place' profile raising event will benefit the town in the long run and start to put Bexleyheath on the map as a great place to not only shop but to also spend quality leisure time with all of the family.

Bexleyheath's Broadway Shopping Centre is to host its first ever star-studded Summer rooftop event this August bank holiday [26th - 27th August], with Jamie Laing from Made in Chelsea and Marcel from Love Island making an appearance on the opening day, along

with South London Ska Reggae band The Dualers.

The event, which is in partnership with Bexleyheath BID, will take over Broadway's rooftop for two days and has an exciting line-up of music and dance performances as well as pop-up street food stalls, a bar, fairground attractions and a silent disco.

The main acts include X Factor contestant Joe James from Rough Copy and The Voice star Tom Johnston, whose blind audition of Hometown Glory this year had the crowd roaring.

## Poppy Appeal Launch

Following on from the last two very successful campaign launches, we are pleased to continue our great relationship with the Royal British Legion Bexleyheath & Welling branch. Last year saw us raise over £10,000 through the two-day event while bringing more people to the high street. This year we expect the results to be better still.

Poppies will return to each lamp column in the BID area, as well as the garden of remembrance at Christ Church. In 2015 we saw the arrival of the replica Spitfire and this year it will return by popular demand with a few friends.

On Saturday 28th & Sunday 29th October we will



see a host of retired military vehicles, uniformed personnel, and replica planes from WWII including the Spitfire and Hurricane. All of these retired and replica vehicles are expecting to bring large crowds, and we can expect the weekend to be rather busy.

This event is also expected to gather great press at both local and national levels and will yet again showcase Bexleyheath as the place to enjoy for all age groups.

If you would like to show any additional support to the event with collection tins, posters, or large display poppies, then please get in touch with the BID team, and we will make arrangements for you.

## Enjoy Bexleyheath Loyalty App

The BID is set to launch its first loyalty and reward app in partnership with Indestinate. The app is in the final stages of its development and has been secured free of charge for the BID and its members.

In the build-up to its public launch, we will be asking businesses to consider offers and rewards for loyal customers. As I'm sure you are all aware, loyal custom makes up a large portion of your income and we wish to exploit this further.

The App is designed on a similar basis to a supermarket loyalty card. However, points are issued for repeat visits rather than spend. The more someone visits, the more points they earn, and therefore the bigger the

reward. Each offer and point system is bespoke to your business but operated from one town centre app. On top of this repeat custom encouragement, you will also receive the back of house data on usage and access to consumer email addresses.

To launch the app and to ensure its long-term success, we will be limiting access and use of the app to employees of the BID area only for a trial period. Upon its anticipated success this will be launched to the general public at the start of the New Year.

If you are interested in this App being operated in your business or require further info, then please let the team know.

# Business updates

## Road Works Update

I'm sure you are all fully aware of the BTCR road works that are currently taking place on Albion Road and Gravel Hill. We have been liaising with the project manager as regularly as possible and tried to keep the impact to a minimum, although we appreciate these works are still having a negative effect on most.

The Albion Road phase is nearing completion with the stretch between Bowling alley and Townley Road due to reopen in early September. The section currently closed between Gravel Hill and Highfield road will reopen to eastbound traffic shortly after this date. However, the westbound traffic movement is not due to reopen until after the Gravel Hill works conclude in November.

To date, the Albion Road works are ahead of schedule and remain on course to be completed much earlier than anticipated. The Gravel Hill works are slightly delayed and may run until late November.

We have requested rate relief from Capita for this phase of works but have been instructed that each business needs to complete this individually or appoint a representative to complete this for you. This will need to be done through the Valuations Office Agency <https://www.gov.uk/correct-your-business-rates>

We have some supporting evidence of footfall and car park usage being much lower than usual and can provide this upon request to support your claims.

## Contingency Planning

What would you do if there was a large power failure, terrorism related incident or large scale public disorder incident that affected your business? When was the last time you checked on your emergency plans? Where is your nearest AED machine? Who is our appointed first aider?

These are all questions that we have recently been asked or thought about. Can you answer them all or does it lead you to more questions? Either way we are here to help - with training course running throughout the year, good relations with the emergency services and council, and our BID manager having first-hand experience in dealing with these types of scenarios.

Over the coming months, we will be assessing and reporting on the local environment and access to emergency equipment. This will be undertaken with the aim to develop a Bexleyheath Contingency plan. To complete this, we will require input from all businesses and users of the Broadway.

If you have any immediate concerns you wish to discuss, then please contact the team.



## Christmas

Following on from last year's new lighting scheme and improved festive calendar, we are looking to improve it further. This year we wish to incorporate not just our consumers but our businesses and the workforce as well.

If you have particular offers or events scheduled that you wish to promote to the business workforce, then please let us know by the 30th September. Once this information is gathered, we will be putting together a special one off newsletter to be distributed amongst Bexleyheath Businesses and other local business hubs to promote your offering.

Further still, if you have offers to go out in the public domain via our website, and social media channels then get in touch. Let's give our consumers more reason to enjoy Bexleyheath this Christmas.

Switch on, and Grotto Launch will be simultaneous on the 18th November.

Get in touch ...

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