

SLEAFORD

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Business Improvement District

Issue 9

Love Sleaford

February 14th - a day to be romantic - to find love in everything you do - so why not find love in Sleaford.

Why not ask for one of our 'Love Sleaford' hearts to display in your window. You can put on a special offer or just give your support to Sleaford.

Request a FREE heart by emailing enquiries@sleafordbid.co.uk or calling 01529 413652.

We'll be promoting 'our love' through the local press and hope that lots of businesses will show their love with their hearts on their windows!



Renewal Ballot

The BID comes to the end of its first five year term on 30th September 2012. So this July Sleaford businesses will have the opportunity to vote in another ballot to re-elect the BID for another five year term.

The renewal ballot will take place in through June to early July 2012. Over the coming months there will be plenty of opportunity for every business to get involved. There will be one to one meetings along with consultation events to make sure all businesses who want to have input into shaping the next five years of the BID can have their say. As many of you will know the BID was elected by the businesses on a Business Plan created by the pre-BID group in consultation with local businesses, and the same will

happen this time.

Businesses will be telling us what they want to see happen and where they want to see improvements. The BID is in place to provide benefits for the businesses who pay a levy - and is independent of the local councils. Recently we have been running an online survey to gauge the feelings of business and we have had positive feedback with many businesses seeing the benefit of the BID and highlighting areas where it can and will work to the advantages of the businesses.

There is a lot of potential and real opportunity for businesses to shape the Business Improvement District for the next five years - so don't miss out on having your say.

Don't forget the BID has cycle lockers available to hire in Sleaford - Contact 01529 413652

Mary Portas



The BID welcomed the recently published Mary Portas Review – not only because it acknowledged the tough challenges facing all High Street and town centre businesses, but also because it came up with positive suggestions to help town centres.

Ms Portas sent out a clear message that market towns have a real future, provided they are willing to rise to the challenge of the supermarkets and take a creative and open-minded approach to offering shoppers and tourists the mix of goods, great customer service and events which they want.

The "Queen of Shops" said Business Improvement Districts have an important part to play in providing promotions and initiatives and working with businesses. She also recommended that local government takes a look at how incentives can be put in place to help new and existing businesses to develop and grow – say, by using discretionary powers to give business rate concessions to new local businesses.

Check it out for yourselves at www.maryportas.com

Shopwatch Poster

Cracking down on Retail Crime in Sleaford is a priority for the Shopwatch group in Sleaford.

As with the Pubwatch group a poster is being designed deterring would-be thieves and assisting shops in putting the message across that shop theft will not be tolerated and thieves will be prosecuted. The Shopwatch members continue to attend regular meetings, share intelligence and provide support to each other on issues of importance to all retailers in the town. The radio link handsets provide extra security and are being used to ensure that criminals are unable to move from one shop to another without being traced by CCTV and watched by other retailers.



kerching
MAKING YOUR TILL RING

Retail Support

We are delighted to be working with experts in the field of retail support who recently delivered a very well received evening workshop to independent retailers in the area. Kerching Retail Ltd are putting together a package of support for a good number of retailers providing a full retail assessment, guidance on window displays, maximising sales, customer service and lots of

other top tips. Working with North Kesteven District Council who are joint funding this programme, we hope this will provide a platform for many retailers to really show their worth and show everyone that Sleaford is worth a visit.

The support is ongoing so advice will continue either one to one or via website resources and much of the guidance for retailers can be put in place at low cost. We really think this type of approach is a win win for all concerned and we would like to see all retailers in the town embrace the support over the coming months. It is hoped that a website portal will be developed which provides 'best practice' documents and guidelines, so if you do not receive direct support you can access the good advice online. Following on from the success of the last workshop we will also be holding another couple of similar workshops over the next few months to ensure all businesses in Sleaford have an opportunity to benefit.

Signage Projects



Working with the Economic Development Department at North Kesteven District Council we are getting nearer to installing a new large sign at the entrance to the Enterprise Park which will have a map and include business listings. This new sign will clearly show land already in use and land which is available for development. To enhance this and at the request of a business owner who attended our recent AGM we are putting together a printed leaflet which will also include a map and business listings which will be available in February. The BID is pleased to be able to deliver this simple but effective way to assist businesses who are sometimes frustrated by 'not being found'. If this proves successful we will be looking to extend a similar method of promotion to other areas in the town.

Easter Event



Look out for further details coming soon about Easter activities in Sleaford. Join in the fun with food and offers to attract customers during the Easter break.

SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL



The Smarter Choices Team at Lincolnshire County Council is offering a unique, exciting and FREE opportunity to work you and your business.

The team is dedicated to promoting sustainable and active travel with a proven record of achieving results. Their expertise includes; corporate cycle training packages, negotiating discounted ticketing schemes, personalised travel planning, car sharing via the Lincolnshire Car Sharing website, and facilitating walking and cycling challenges.

They encourage and champion sustainable transport to existing businesses across Lincolnshire, but we are looking for new organisations to work with.

If you are interested in finding out more about how they can help your business or have any questions please contact the Smarter Choices Team on 01522 555190 or email sustainabletravelteam@lincolnshire.gov.uk

Open Consultation Meetings

We are delighted to inform you of our Open Consultation Meetings taking place through March, April and May. These meetings are designed to allow you, the BID businesses of Sleaford to have your say on what the BID does in the next five years. Come and see what we've done so far and have your say in how you'd like your levy spent in the next five years. All levy payers are welcome. Meetings take place from 5.30 pm - 7.00 pm at the Solo Club, Market Place, Sleaford. Tel: 01529 413652 for more information.

The dates are;
**Thursday
1st March**
Monday 26th March
**Wednesday
11th April**

Sleaford BID Accounts

You will find enclosed with your newsletter a summary of the Sleaford BID accounts for 2011. The Board felt that as not everyone attended the AGM or had requested a copy of the accounts, it was important that they be given an opportunity to see them.

Radio Advertising

Ever thought about radio advertising - think its too expensive - well think again.

The Sleaford BID has been offered a great deal by Lincs FM for the New Year. The offer provides an opportunity for each business to have a 10 second commercial within a 40 second advert for a great low price which the BID will further discount and which includes production costs.

We like to give three businesses the opportunity the advertise at a time, but if there's low take up one business may like one, two or even all three slots!

At either end of the 30 second commercial there will be a promotional 5 seconds for Sleaford so everyone knows where to come. Each advertiser will receive a minimum of 10 commercials for one week.

If you are interested and would like further details please contact the BID Manager on 01529 413652.

Apprenticeships

Looking for staff this New Year - why not consider an apprentice. There are many local advisors and organisations that can help and some have fully funded places available.

This offers an excellent opportunity to provide work for a young person and to increase your workforce at low or even no cost.

See www.apprenticeships.org.uk for details.

- One in five 16-24 year olds is jobless and searching for work at a time when five unemployed people are chasing every vacancy.
- Our young people are this country's future and they need your help.

Independents Day on 4th July is once again being promoted by Skillsmart Retail.

This promotion is aimed at supporting local independent retailers. The campaign encourages the public to buy one thing in an independent shop on 4th July 2012 and support the local retailers that help make their towns and cities so special. Now in its second year, the Sleaford BID is supporting the campaign and inviting Sleaford retailers to make Independents' Day as big as possible.

The campaign will launch in February and takes a two-pronged approach. The run-up will focus on retailers using the message 'get ready for Independents' Day', and being provided with the support and tools to be the best they can be. This includes promotional material that can be downloaded from the Skillsmart website. The weeks up to 4th of July will concentrate on raising public awareness to buy from independents on that date.

By being part of Independents' Day 2012, it will help raise the profile of independent shops, emphasise their importance to the local community and help to grow footfall and increase sales.

Lincolnshire Business Support

Lincolnshire County Council have launched a new portal for business support when starting or growing a business. The site provides an introduction to the issues to consider when starting or growing a business and links you to more in-depth information. It describes the free schemes that you may want to take advantage of, local events and networking opportunities and details of local services offering professional advice.

www.businesslincolnshire.com