

Wheathampstead Business Group

Decisions and Action Points from Tuesday Turntable on 20 October 2015
held in the Swan

Present:		
Julie Bell	Claire Farley	Claire Pickard
Richard Brett	Brian Joyce	Jan Spragge (part)
Richard Burn (part)	Caron Kendall	Carol Tizard
Jackie Curtis	Peter Partington	Norman Whitwood

Guest Speakers:

Richard Burn on leasing Vans

- Most businesses lease 1 – 3 vans.
- Many businesses want vans they can also use for private purposes.
- Suppliers no longer keep large stocks of vans.
- In up-market areas there is a greater demand for smarter vans.
- There is currently a demand for high-end pick-up trucks.

Richard also gave some tips for buying and selling used vehicles.

Jan Spragge on Scout Post

- The area covered is Wheathampstead and Blackmore End.
- Christmas cards will be collected from Manor Pharmacy as from 3 December and from St Helen's Church as from 6 December.
- The last delivery will be on 18 December.
- The cost is 20p per card, and all profits go to the Scout Group. (In 2014 the profit was £505, with a total delivery of 2,231 cards.)

Caron Kendall, Development Manager, Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire Federation of Small Businesses, on the FSB's campaign Keep Trade Local

- FSB is the largest business group in the UK with 200,000 members all of whom are small businesses or self-employed. 40% are sole traders.
- FSB is non-political and non-profit making and is funded purely by members' subscriptions.
- FSB campaigns and lobbies (MPs, councils, etc.) to improve the environment for small businesses.
- FSB believes small businesses are better for the environment and the economy, enabling more money to stay within the community in which it is spent.
- FSB opposes the switch from town/village centres to out-of-town centres.
 - If a town/village centre disappears, other services (e.g. surgeries, libraries, the post office) often disappear too.

- Small businesses need to be aware that out-of-town centres tend to provide better parking facilities and longer opening hours.
- Small businesses can sometimes successfully work together, such as by selling another business's products when that business is closed.
- FSB believes the switch has slowed down, but town/village centres increasingly contain 'destinations' such as restaurants rather than shops.
- FSB supports 'Buy Local' campaigns and promotes Small Business Saturday (though this is organised by a separate organisation).
 - Ideas include stamping cards etc. when a customer buys something local, giving discounts and pop-up shops.
 - A good idea is to invite the local MP or someone famous to meet local businesses and build on the publicity that this creates.
 - Caron will supply a list of initiatives.

An idea that arose from the discussion that followed was to look into the possibility of a notice board in Wheathampstead specifically for businesses to use.

Action point:

1. Richard will add the notice board idea to the agenda for a future Tuesday Turntable.

Small Business Saturday (5 December 2015)

Decisions:

- (a) We shall start in a small way in 2015, with a view to expanding in 2016 if successful.
- (b) We shall approach the 40 or so businesses in the High Street area and ask them to take part.
- (c) Each participating business will be given a shop window sticker and will stamp customers' cards.
- (d) Participating customers will take part in a prize draw. Their stamped cards will be put in a box in 10 High Street (formerly the Brewhouse Gallery) and winners will be drawn.
- (e) WEB will fund the prizes.
- (f) Other businesses can display in 10 High Street.
- (g) If possible, the event should be promoted in local newspapers.
- (h) We should also promote the event at Christmas Lights Up.

Action points:

2. Carol, Claire F, Claire P and Julie will tour the businesses and ask them to participate.
3. Julie will devise stickers for the businesses to display, liaising with Stuart Jenkins.
4. Peter will produce some notes for participating businesses.
5. Julie will produce some flyers to hand out at Christmas Lights Up.

6. Richard will issue an email to all businesses to advise them that they can display in 10 High Street.
7. We need a volunteer to do a Press Release.

Seasonal Preparation – Christmas Lights Up

Action point:

8. Businesses wishing to advertise on the reverse side of the flyers promoting Christmas Lights Up should send their adverts to Norman.

Buy It Locally campaign

Julie outlined the plan for the campaign and presented a paper breaking down the project into 4 phases.

Decisions:

- (a) The Steering Committee need not consist entirely of WEB members.
- (b) The Steering Committee can authorise expenditure of up to £500 to deliver Phase 1.
- (c) The Steering Committee will be a decision-making body, keeping Tuesday Turntable informed of developments, and will seek further approval to move on to the next phase of the project.

Action points:

9. Richard will email WEB members asking for people to tender to be Project Manager for Phase 1 (two days' work).
10. Julie will form a Steering Committee. (Stuart Jenkins is interested in being a member.)
11. The Project Manager (when appointed) will draw up a programme, so that people thinking of volunteering will have a better idea of where they can contribute most effectively.

Wheatabiz Club

The Club is succeeding in attracting a largely different set of people from the Tuesday Turntable or the networking breakfasts. The next Wheatabiz Club is on 9 November.

Action point:

12. Peter will sell the tickets for the next Club meeting if Sue Hemming is unavailable.

Herts Business Awards

WEB has been shortlisted. The awards ceremony is on the same evening as Christmas Lights Up.

Action point:

13. Julie will represent WEB at the Awards Ceremony.

Window on Wheathampstead (WOW) 2015

Action points brought forward:

14. Jackie will update the database (and will be paid by WEB). Jackie will make a proposal to WEB regarding costs.
15. Richard will add notes about his role in the project to those that Peter and Claire Partington and Adam Collis have already written
16. Claire F will produce similar notes about Village Day.
17. Richard and Norman will liaise over the distribution of spare copies of WOW to local shops.
18. In the next email to members, Richard will ask if and when they received a copy of WOW.
19. Peter will analyse the results of this survey.

Publicity and press coverage

Action point brought forward:

20. Peter will produce some ideas for the current year to boost the level of attendance at meetings and to identify and articulate the benefits of WEB membership.

Social Events

Decisions:

- (a) The WEB Christmas party will be held at the Golden Elephant.
- (b) Invitations will be sent out as physical letters. (Unfortunately it is not possible to use the Scout Post as the letters need to be sent out soon.)

Action point:

21. Norman will book an evening at the Golden Elephant for the Christmas party. STOP PRESS - this is 8 December.

Any Other Business

Note: There have been no suggestions for how Wheathampstead might apply for a rural business grant.

Decision:

WEB should consider whether to support a good local cause, such as Dementia Awareness or the Food Bank.

Action points:

22. Richard will include supporting a good cause in the agenda for a future meeting.

Date of next Turntable: Tuesday, 17 November at 7.30 for 7.45 pm at the Swan