

## October Update from Dorking Town Partnership

### **Artisan Market**

The Artisan Market has increased the number of stall holders from 20 previous pitches due to social distancing to 30-32 pitches. There are now new stalls, music and tables and chairs for eating available. Alternative arrangements for the gazebos will be made next year as the company currently supplying them is changing their business model.

### **Christmas Light Switch On**

Options for switching on the Christmas lights are being reviewed as new safety legislation has been introduced which alters the processes under which they can be turned on. DTP are liaising with Friends of Dorking to discuss options.

### **Website Updates**

The majority of information has been loaded up to the Dorking Town Partnership website, which shows the offering DTP gives to businesses. The website is much clearer now it is dedicated to levy payers and will be ready to go live shortly. The Visit Dorking website is a much bigger piece of work and is therefore taking longer. Updates will be provided as progress is made.

### **Welcome Booklet**

The booklet will be ready for new businesses in a couple of weeks. It will also be provided to existing BID business as it contains useful information.

### **Rialto Planning Application (Dene Street)**

A planning application has been submitted by the owners of Rialto to transfer their business from the current location on South Street to the premises formerly Red Bar on Dene Street to incorporate a restaurant with 9 hotel rooms above. The matter was discussed by the Board Director's present at this month's Board Meeting and the application was very well received. It was said the development would bring much needed hotel rooms to the centre of Dorking, keep the premises as a commercial venue and keep Rialto open as a business in town. It was accepted that there were wider concerns with the parking, and this would have to be reviewed. It was also accepted that there was no representation from The White Horse at the Board meeting and there would need to be further discussion with their management to consider their opinions as Board members.

### **Town Wi-Fi Proposal**

A proposal for public Wi-Fi within the town was discussed and generally agreed across the Board that it was unclear whether this provision was required within the town based on the information provided, especially with the cost involved. A meeting will be held to discuss possible benefits for the town and whether the technology has the longevity to justify the cost.

### **Smart CityTree**

A Smart CityTree is an installation that uses a bio-tech filter (moss based) to clean polluted air around it. It was suggested that Dorking could benefit from such an installation, and this

was put to the Board to discuss. The Board agreed that there were limitations due to the size of the structure and having the space within the town centre for it to go. It was also agreed that the installation could attract vandalism. Due to these reasons the board voted not to proceed.

### **Mayflower/Thanksgiving Events**

The 24<sup>th</sup> November 2021 sees the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Thanksgiving in America and as the Mayflower events planned were cancelled due to Covid it was discussed whether this milestone could be celebrated instead. The Board were reminded of a number of Mayflower events that had been arranged upon lifting of Covid restrictions that did not receive the support required and as such were cancelled. It was agreed that there was little point in arranging events in which people were not interested. There was agreement that an event could be kept on a list of annual events for the town and further events could be planned when more feasible and this was important to support the town twinning with Duxbury in America. Instead, a small event for levy payers in November was suggested with the theme of Thanksgiving, which was agreed by the Board.

### **Town Entertainment**

Busking in town is due to commence from 20<sup>th</sup> November.

### **Business Bootcamp (MVDC)**

The Business Bootcamps with Chichester college have been a success and there will be an in person event in January 2022. The bootcamps were fully booked and well received. Further details would be coming with the added benefit of the in person bootcamp being in Dorking.

### **Christmas Car Parking (MVDC)**

On the three festive weekends before Christmas Mole Valley car parks will be free of charge. The dates are 5/6<sup>th</sup>, 12/13<sup>th</sup> and 19/20<sup>th</sup> December.

### **Car Park Refurbishment Plans (MVDC)**

The carpark refurbishment plans were now moving ahead and MVDC are assessing tenders for Southside car park and work should be underway before Christmas. Things are also moving forward with St Martin's car park and work should commence in Spring 2022. There was now a contracted specialist to do the detailed work in relation to the EV points infrastructure so there will be further information on this soon.