

## August Update from the Dorking BID

### **Business Improvement District AGM**

The BID AGM is provisionally arranged for 27<sup>th</sup> September 2023 at 6.00pm at the Quaker Meeting House.

### **The Foundry**

The board discussed the MVDC project at The Foundry as a July workshop consultation sponsored by the Council was held. It was discussed that while it would be desirable for the BID to be aware of projects undertaken by MVDC, this wasn't always realistic or possible. It was also discussed that there should be a position to be taken whereby the BID has an interest in MVDC projects where it affects levy paying businesses.

### **Footfall Counter**

The Dorking BID is working on getting a free footfall counter from the High Streets Taskforce. As a prerequisite for this, the BID has undertaken the required training.

### **Websites**

MVDC will retain the Visit Dorking website and the BID will renew and improve the Dorking Town Partnership/Hello Dorking website, which will have information for both the tourism and business sides of the BID, addressing both purposes of the organisation's goals of supporting a thriving Dorking economy and trading environment. It will have a business directory and an integrated map, much better SEO and be user friendly. It will function properly on a mobile phone and will be built on WordPress and on a green server.

### **Dorking Gift Card**

The possibility of a gift card for Dorking is being discussed. This would involve Dorking businesses being signed up to a scheme where individuals can purchase a gift card to spend in a variety of local shops. The cards would run through the Mastercard system. There would be no additional cost to the shops, and they would receive the money once the funds on the card were spent by the customer. Further questions need to be asked of the company providing the service but it is currently being explored.

### **Christmas Consultation**

There has been a great response to the consultation for the Dorking Christmas event. Different plans for assisting people with the journey into town are being explored, along with additional parking to be provided due to the closure of the high street and St Martin's Walk car park.

### **Loyal Free**

The summer trail runs from 11<sup>th</sup> August with an omni-channel campaign to advertise the trail, the businesses involved and the prizes to be won. There is sponsorship from local businesses and non-profit organisations.

### **Policing Strategy**

The BID has made every attempt to engage with local police in an effort to reduce theft in the town.

### **Roundabouts**

The Maintenance of the roundabouts will not be supported by the council due to the costs involved, as such, the BID will not be able to sponsor the cockerel roundabout and be responsible for its maintenance.

### **Landlord strategy**

A strategy for the vacant premises in Dorking is also being reviewed by the BID. There is work ongoing to establish who the local landlords are within the town and gauge their attitude towards their unit and the town. This would allow for the BID to consider different approaches to empty units such as window wrapping, local artists painting windows and information regarding the town to be displayed in empty units.

### **Thank you**

The Board would like to extend their heartfelt thanks to Ben Curtis who has stepped down as a Board Member.