

Operation Christmas Cracker

Rugby First's campaign on security and safety in the town centre during the festive period was once again very successful. Planning for the Christmas Cracker operation started in October and included additional training for the Rugby Rangers as well as organising security workshops and working alongside the Police on security initiatives.

Following the strong interest in the security workshops held last year, Rugby First held ten courses this year. Over 50 businesses sent Managers and Senior Staff to attend and the feedback has been very positive. In addition to this, the operation also supported local businesses in their stores with over 225 hours of assistance from the Rugby Rangers, including a number of shops benefiting from Rangers working in store at busy periods, acting as a deterrent.

Rugby First also worked in close partnership with Warwickshire Police on various security initiatives and undercover operations. There were extra uniformed officers in the town centre, a number of undercover operations, crime prevention stands that saw over



2000 cats bells and 150 personal attack alarms handed out. Additional visits focusing on security and safety during the night were made to pubs and clubs. As a result of the work during this period over 70 arrests were made. They were assisted by ShopNet, PubWatch, the CCTV Control Room and its operators.

Save Money on your shredding with Rugby First

Rugby First has been looking at other ways to save local businesses money including shredding services. We have teamed up with a local shredding company Shred Easy to provide a competitive quote for shredding. There are three possible options that you could take advantage of to save money:

1. Shred on site at a cost of £40 per visit for three secure bins worth of shredding. Each additional bin will cost £10.
2. Shred on site at a cost of £40 per collection (from one collection point) Shred up to 16 sacks
3. Get your shredding for FREE. Rugby First will provide you with the shredding bag and we will arrange collection of your bags once they are full. We will then arrange with the shredding company for the collection of the bags from our office. By using one collection point and enabling businesses to use the bags will make this option cost effective.

All of the options will provide a certificate to confirm that your paperwork has been shredded.

Please contact Aftab if you are interested.

Contact Us Cleaner/Ranger Assistance
Aftab Gaffar – Rugby BID Division
Robin Richter – Rugby Town Centre Division

tel. 01788 541334
tel. 01788 569436 Email: aftab@rugbyfirst.org
tel. 01788 572150 Email: robin.richter@rugbyfirst.org

STEP INTO SPRING

FASHION SHOW

CELEBRATING RUGBY'S INDEPENDENT FASHION

SUNDAY 10TH APRIL AT 7.00PM
THE MARQUEE
DUNCHURCH PARK HOTEL

TICKETS £8.50
inclusive of a glass of wine and cup cake.
Raffle with fantastic Prizes.

All profits will go to
The Warwickshire Air Ambulance
Event co-ordinator Rachel Palmer

Immodica Style Scallywags Vanilla exposure

Tickets will be available to purchase at the participating shops

NEWS



Keeping the businesses of Rugby town centre informed & updated



March 2011

RUGBY FESTIVAL OF CULTURE... BE PART OF IT!

Rugby is to celebrate its' rich and diverse cultural heritage with its first ever 'Festival of Culture'. The exciting new event, backed by Rugby First, Rugby Borough Council and Warwickshire County Council, will take place at a variety of town centre locations and venues, from Thursday 30th June to Tuesday 12th July.



Offering a quality programme of entertainment to suit all tastes, including music, dance, art, literature, walks, food and drink, the Festival will blend existing activity with new. It will also provide a fantastic platform for local individuals and groups to perform or showcase their work.

For the Festival to succeed the support of the business community is vital – so how can you get involved?

- Planning an event during the Festival? Let us know and we can help promote it through the FREE Festival Guide. Alternatively you may be working on an existing activity that could be moved to coincide with the Festival?
- As part of an art trail local artists will be looking for businesses to host their work (single or multiple items) during the Festival. If you think you can offer space, no matter what the size, we would love to hear from you.
- A programme of street entertainment is planned. Do you have a suitable space outside (or indeed inside) your business where they could perform? If so, would you be interested in hosting some entertainers for a day?

- If you are a local pub will you be having, or could you have, a comedy, music, open mike or quiz night during the Festival? Would you be interested in organising a Beer Festival or some wine tasting?
- We would like to hear from local restaurants as to how they would like to be involved – perhaps through 'taster events', cooking demonstrations or a special menu for the festival.
- There will be a number of low cost sponsorship and advertising opportunities associated with the Festival – get in touch to find out more.

Robin Richter, Chair of Rugby First Ltd, says: "We are very excited about the Festival and see it as a great opportunity to further raise the profile of Rugby Town Centre, increase visitor numbers and spend, while at the same time lay the foundations for what potentially could become one of Rugby's biggest and most popular events."

For further information on the Festival or to discuss the ideas above (or indeed new ones) please call the Festival Director, Chris Stanley on 07817 312718 or email chris.stanley2009@yahoo.co.uk.



VOUCHER SCHEME BRINGS EXCELLENT RETURN

Promotions over Christmas with Rugby Town Centre Vouchers have proved a big hit. Over 2000 £3 gift vouchers were distributed to schools in Rugby and new housing estates including Coton Meadows and Cawston Grange aimed at encouraging shoppers to spend money in the town centre. As a result over 25% of the vouchers were redeemed! This is an excellent return and we will be looking to continue promotions of a similar nature in our future marketing plans.

Available at:
Rugby Visitors Centre,
The Foyer,
Rugby Art Gallery
Museum & Library
or buy online at
www.rugbyfirst.org

ACCEPTED IN YOUR FAVOURITE LOCAL BUSINESSES IN TOWN
participating stores can be found at www.rugbyfirst.org

St George's Day

Rugby Town will once again be celebrating St George's Day on Saturday 23rd April 2011 and we hope that with your support we can continue to put on Warwickshire's largest St George's day celebrations. Following the year on year success of this event and because the day falls on a Saturday, the activities will be taking place this year in High Street and Sheep Street.

We are currently working hard to put together another great day of entertainment, which will follow a similar format to previous years, and we hope that you will get behind Rugby Town's St George's day celebrations once again. If you have any questions about St George's Day please do not hesitate to contact us.



Town Centre into Recovery?

Although the level of empty shops is unacceptable the number of vacancies is falling. Our percentage vacancy was at its worst in August 2009 at just shy of 10.0%. Only four years earlier it was less than 2.0% and any vacancy at that time would just be snapped up. The national average for shop vacancies in August 2009 was over 20% so although our situation was bad it was nowhere near as bad as it was in places like Coventry, Wolverhampton and Kettering etc.

We were certainly expecting a rash of vacancies in January as this is always the worst time year post Christmas. Although vacancies have come in they have ,touch wood, not been as bad as predicted. The vacancy level for February 2011 is 6.2% so there is little doubt that things have improved. What we know picking up from both local commercial agents and from agents out of town is the fact that retailers are beginning to return and looking for sites. This is true of both the independent sector which is vital to us and the nationals. I know some will point to the quality of the shops that have filled the voids but market forces dictate what people want. As we come out of the recession things will change as they always do.

Sales over the last four months have been up on the previous year so this is also a positive sign as they have been down for more months than one would like to mention. It is patchy though ,with one shop being up by large double digits and then another being down by large double digits. However across the sample that we have now been taking for the past 12 years the trend is up.

No one wants to call the devil but there are definite signs of green shoots and maybe, just maybe, it is the beginning of the end of this recession.



Royal Wedding

In Celebration of the Royal Wedding, Rugby First Ltd, Rugby Borough Council, The Clock Towers shopping centre and Rugby FM will be holding various events including sport and recreation activities and music in Caldecott Park. The Tool Shed Café will provide a Royal Wedding themed menu. The Merchants Inn will be having a street party. We are looking at holding a treasure trail for children with items hidden in shop windows for them to find.



If you are interested in taking part in this or have any other plans or ideas you would like promoting please contact Aftab.



Don't forget to check out money saving Insurance deals

Businesses are all looking for ways to save money in these difficult economic times. So don't forget that Rugby First has negotiated a deal with well known insurance company Allianz to provide competitive insurance quotes to any businesses in the BID area. One of the world's largest insurers are offering fantastic deals because of the services Rugby First provides including the Rangers and the state of the art CCTV system. On Average £300 off the current premium has been saved by businesses who have taken up a policy with Allianz.

Don't forget ,not only will you potentially save money on your insurance premium. If you take up insurance with Allianz you will also get refunded a payment towards your BID levy. This insurance offer really can save your business some money. So if you need a quote please contact Nikki Lee on 01788 820 527 or email nikki.lee@perryappletons.com

It's only a quote and could halve your premium



Smile LOYALTY SCHEME

With many national shops taking advantage of the range of online technology and social media sites ,Rugby First would like to support the independent traders in offering additional exposure in the world of the internet and smart phones. We are currently investigating if there are other ways we can encourage Rugby's shoppers to make more use of the loyalty scheme.

Perhaps we can get a specific text message that is sent out to members that acts in the same way as the card. They show you the text message in order to get their discount. It would mean people will never lose it and it's another way for us to reach another generation of potential customers. We really would like to hear your thoughts on this ,so please contact us and let us know.

BUY LOCAL SHOP LOCAL

Support your shops in Rugby town centre

We are drawing up a campaign with a banner headline of "SHOP LOCAL". Any independent traders wishing to be involved in this please make contact with Aftab. This involves photographs of individual shops and a quote to display in empty shop and in Advertisements.

www.rugbyfirst.org