

# BUSINESS NEWS

Stratforward Newsletter

Issue 3 - January 2016



WEST MIDLANDS  
COMBINED AUTHORITY

At the extraordinary meeting of Stratford-on-Avon District Council yesterday afternoon the Council was asked to consider a motion in the names of Councillors Howse and Jefferson to approach the West Midlands Combined Authority to become a non-constituent member, thereby rescinding the previous decision taken by the Council on 12<sup>th</sup> October 2015, when it was decided against becoming a non-constituent member.

As was mentioned in last week's newsletter businesses and individuals were afforded the opportunity to make statements to the Council ahead of the debate and a vote being taken. It should also be noted that all three LEP's within the region have joined the WMCA. Stratforward together with the RSC, Shakespeare Birthplace Trust, Shakespeare's England, DCS and Elizabeth Dixon all made statements in support of the motion; on the basis that it would afford Stratford District a seat at the table, whilst not ceding any authority or powers to the WMCA. The WMCA will attract significant funding as part of the Governments devolution agenda and the resulting increased opportunity for investment in transport, infrastructure, skills and employment are of vital importance to the business community in the District. Remaining outside of the WMCA would potentially have left Stratford isolated and faced with considerable challenges to attract the necessary funding to address the areas mentioned previously.

I am pleased to say that the Council voted in favour of the motion, 22 yes to 11 no votes and as such will approach the WMCA to become a non-constituent member.

"Following the restructuring of Stratforward in September 2014 and the appointment of a Strategic Board a number of working groups were established to assist in delivering projects tailored to the needs of BID members and the agenda going forwards. We need your help to continue to build on this"

*- Karen Wild BID Manager*

## In This Issue

- West Midlands Combined Authority Update
- Wi-Fi news
- River Festival
- Advertising
- Working group members needed
- Stratford charity Fashion Show



Elephant Wi-Fi

## Wi-Fi Installation Update

As of yesterday the physical installation of the wifi access points was complete around the town centre and we now await the necessary work to be completed by Warwickshire County Council's street lighting team to just 3 sites, their team are hoping to be able to complete that work this week. Following this, testing will commence immediately and shortly afterwards we will formally launch the scheme and issue a public press release.

DCS are kindly working on the design for a window sticker for us that we would like to be displayed in as many premises as possible around the town centre. These stickers will be in a similar format to the BID card ones, albeit slightly larger and we would appreciate your support in promoting the wifi to visitors to the town centre. The greater the engagement with visitors, the better the data will be and it will also ensure that the marketing platform being provided to all BID members is used to best effect.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank firstly all BID members for their strong support for this initiative; property owners and tenants for agreeing to have access points installed on their premises; Warwickshire County Council for their significant financial contribution of £20,000 and Stratford District Council for their support with legal costs and the provision of access point locations and power.

This has been a complex project and a significant investment on the part of Stratforward, I look forward to being able to announce that the scheme is live within the very short term. Watch this space!



**Advertising deadline** for the Shakespeare Birthday Celebration Brochure for Saturday 23rd April is **Friday 26th February 2016**

## Stratford River Festival

Saturday 2nd & Sunday 3rd July



Applications have been flooding in to have a pitch or craft stall at this popular event! Limited pitch discounts are still available to BID businesses.

Please contact Ruth to discuss your requirements. [ruth@stratforward.co.uk](mailto:ruth@stratforward.co.uk)

PS: Wish us luck at The Touch FM Pride of Stratford Awards 2016 on Friday 5th February where the 2015 River Festival has been nominated for Tourism Initiative of the Year!

# We Need You!

Following the restructuring of Stratforward in September 2014 and the appointment of a Strategic Board a number of working groups were established to assist in delivering projects tailored to the needs of BID members and driving the agenda going forwards. Although some businesses have engaged with this process there are a number of groups that still require experienced and knowledgeable people from the BID membership to support the delivery of areas of work in which we are involved as follows: -

Member benefits – This group is tasked with delivering initiatives that have a direct impact upon BID members bottom lines. Examples of projects delivered include the BID discount card, discounted parking rates for BID **member's employees, discounted advertising rates and free editorial within event brochures, discounted stalls at events.** We are also looking at the opportunity to afford BID members corporate utility rates (please contact the Stratforward office if you would be prepared to engage with Utilitywise to discover the level of savings achievable). This group has the potential to develop schemes that will be of significant benefit to levy payers and we are looking for individuals to come forward and get involved.

Transport & Infrastructure (via The Town Transport Group) – This well established group was initially formed many years ago by Stratforward, Stratford Society and The Town Council; it is now a mature group and includes, **amongst others, representation at Councillor and officer level from the Town, District and County Council's, experts from the field, Stratford Society, The Cycling Forum and is attended by a member of Nadhim Zahawi's team.** Karen Wild became Chair of this group last week. It is important that the group has business representation and we are looking for one or two businesses to come forward and get involved, please contact the Stratforward office if you can spare the time to attend meetings, these are generally held on a Wednesday morning at 10am on a monthly basis.

Performance Monitoring – A considerable amount of work has been undertaken to identify key performance indicators and the means of obtaining data. We are now looking for BID members to get involved to help drive the collection of data, particularly in relation to the performance of town centre businesses eg. Retail sales +/- previous year, hospitality sales +/- previous year, in-store footfall +/- previous year etc. Please contact the Stratforward office if you would like to become more involved.

PR & Marketing Working Group – This group has been extremely productive and is made up of a number of PR and marketing professionals employed within the BID membership. We would welcome additional involvement from similarly qualified BID members.

Security Working Group – This group requires representation from the membership of DISC/Bardwatch. If you are interested in becoming involved please contact the Stratforward office.

Events – This group already has a considerable number of members, however, if any BID member believes that they have relevant experience and know how please do not hesitate to contact the office.

Property & Inward Investment – This group recently delivered the Inward Investment insert for inclusion in the Invest in Warwickshire promotional pack which was taken to the BCSC Conference and Exhibition last year. We are looking for property professionals in particular or individuals with knowledge in the area of property and inward investment. Please contact the office if you are able to become involved.



## Contact Us

Give us a call for more information about our services and products

**Stratforward**  
10-11 Sheep Street  
Stratford-upon-Avon  
CV37 6EF

Main Line  
01789 292718

Events  
01789 299011

[info@stratforward.co.uk](mailto:info@stratforward.co.uk)

Visit us on the web at  
[www.stratforward.co.uk](http://www.stratforward.co.uk)

Stratford Fashion Show tickets are on sale NOW in aid of The Shakespeare Hospice!

Hosted by TV's fashion guru John Scott..... Local people will be modelling for 18 of Stratford's retailers!

Tickets on sale at: Aspire Style, Cancer Research, Domino, Gemini, Gorgeous Obsession, New Idle, Sew Me Something, VH & Co and Nuha. And on line at The Shakespeare Hospice and Stratford Artthouse

Do contact Tor to donate a prize for the raffle.



Karen Wild BID Manager

Welcome to the third edition of our regular weekly e-news bulletin. I hope that you are finding the information and updates within this newsletter helpful and welcome your feedback about any issues or subject matter you would like to be included in future editions.

If you require any information or support please do not hesitate to contact a member of the Stratforward team.

Best wishes, Karen

All information correct at time of publication.

Stratforward improving business in Stratford-upon-Avon town centre