

BUSINESS NEWS

Stratforward Newsletter

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Stratforward Welcomes Lonely Planet Top Listing

Stratforward has welcomed the announcement yesterday (Tuesday) that Lonely Planet has named Warwickshire as one of Europe's top destinations for travellers this summer - the only UK location to appear in their Best in Europe 2016 list, which highlights the European destinations that should be on travellers' radars right now.

Chairman Sara Aspley said:

"This is fantastic news. Lonely Planet is the world's leading travel media company with tens of thousands of dedicated followers across the globe. What they say influences travel decisions worldwide and I am confident that this will add to the numbers of visitors heading our way this year and beyond."

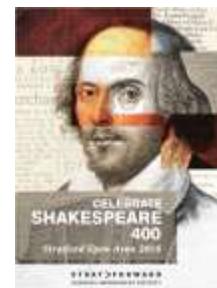
She added:

"I have no doubt that everything going on in Stratford-upon-Avon this year to celebrate the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's death - from the recent Shakespeare Celebrations Weekend to the opening of Shakespeare's Schoolroom to the public for the first time, the re-opening of New Place on 1 July, the remodelling and renovation of parts of the Swan Theatre, not to mention the world-class productions currently taking place at the RST, have all contributed to the county being named as one of the places to visit this year.

"But non-Shakespeare related things such, as the Aviva Women's Tour Cycling Race coming to town on 16 June, and Stratforward-run events like the Festival of Motoring, our award-winning River Festival in July and the Food Festival in September will I am sure have also contributed to this coveted accolade."

Best in Europe is compiled by Lonely Planet's travel experts, who for over 40 years, have trodden every cobbled street and admired every view on the continent, keeping one step ahead of the travel curve. They share their insider tips on where's hot in Europe this summer. The list includes destinations that have a buzz right now; overlooked spots that are poised to be the next traveller find; or perennial favourites with something fresh on offer.

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In This Issue

- Lonely Planet Listing
- Diary Dates
- Breakfast at Bensons
- Compton & Clarke Store
- NIYM Store
- New Place Competition
- Aviva Cycle Tour
- BID Member Spotlight

Lonely Planet's Editorial Director, Tom Hall, said:

"Warwickshire is best known for Stratford-upon-Avon, the birthplace of Shakespeare, but Warwickshire has so much more to offer. Check out the atmospheric remains of Kenilworth Castle, experience the wonderful mix of Tudor, Georgian and Victorian architecture of Charlecote Park, or sample some culinary wizardry at Michelin-starred The Cross. Whether travellers are seeking sublime scenery, historic market towns or perfect ruins, Warwickshire has them all, making the county one of our top European picks this summer."

Helen Peters, Chief Executive of Shakespeare's England, the Destination Management Organisation for Warwickshire said:

"I am delighted that Warwickshire has been selected by Lonely Planet as one of Europe's top destinations this year. 2016 has been such an important year with the county celebrating so many important events and anniversaries, not only Shakespeare's 400th but also the 300th anniversary of Capability Brown and 750th anniversary of the Siege of Kenilworth Castle. To be awarded this accolade is testament to all that this fantastic county has to offer both domestic and international visitors alike".



Photos courtesy of
The Stratford Herald

Lonely Planet's Best in Europe 2016 Destinations are as follows

1. Peloponnese, Greece	2. Aarhus, Denmark
3. Venice, Italy	4. The Dordogne, France
5. Lviv, Ukraine	6. Warwickshire, England
7. Extremadura, Spain	8. East Coast Tenerife, Canary Islands
9. Texel, the Netherlands	10. Northern Dalmatia, Croatia

Dates for your diary!

28th May to 5th June - Warwickshire half term

30th May - Bank holiday

4th June - Stratford Swan Hopping

4th June - Let It Glow Moonlit Walk

10th June to 10th July - Euro Championships

11th & 12th June - Queens 90th Birthday

14th June - Stratford Races

16th June - Avivia Cycle Tour

19th June - Father's Day

25th June - Armed Forces Day

27th June to 10th July - Wimbledon

28th June - Stratford Races

23rd July - Warwickshire Summer Holidays

24th July—Shakespeare & Wellesbourne Lions Raft Race



Breakfast at Bensons - A New Chapter For Award-Winning Eaterie



One of Stratford's best loved eateries closes at end of business today (Wednesday) - but fans of Bensons need not fear because the award-winning establishment is moving just yards round the corner.

Bensons has been trading in the town for nearly 25 years in its current location, Bards Walk. However, with Bards Walk closing for redevelopment and conversion to six large two storey units opening in 2017, Bensons is having to move. It will reopen at its new home at 40 Henley Street tomorrow (Thursday).

Joint owner Symon Powell said:

"We are absolutely delighted to be keeping the Bensons name alive. After being in the town for 24 years, it would have been a shame to have closed down. " And although any move is traumatic there are advantages to this one. "The new Bensons will be bigger and has the added benefit of outside tables and chairs." said Symon. "It also means we can lengthen our opening hours to 5.30pm and employ more people. We will now have 20 staff on our books. "The new location is also just a few doors down from sister business, Bensons House of Tea"

He went on:

"Not everything is changing though. The whole team, including myself, John and Andy are moving too. And we will continue to offer our full menu, including our ever popular £5 breakfasts and of course our award-winning Afternoon Teas. "Tonight is going to be a busy one with the move, but we thought it was important that customers were not inconvenienced by Bensons being closed for any period of time. "We are looking forward to welcoming our existing Bensons customers to our new home."



Second Gift for Henley Street

Another award-winning independent business has also just moved into Henley Street. Compton and Clarke specialises in gifts, jewellery, accessories and toiletries - with an emphasise on English made products - at high street prices. This is their second shop, having been in Northampton for the last 15 years.

Company Director, Annie Rockley said: "There has been a move away from goods manufactured in the Far East, and in particular China. This has resulted in a broader selection of English made merchandise being available in the gift and home sector. Furthermore, retail price points are quite keen meaning that many of our products are selling at what we consider to be impulsive high street prices rather than exclusive gallery prices"

She added: "Whilst Northampton is not a tourist destination, there have been regular requests for British made products which led the company to believe the time was right to open a second store in a higher profile visitor destination and they were delighted to find premises in Henley Street." Central to the new shop is contemporary pewter giftware designed by Annie herself and made locally. "As you walk around the store you will see small show cards highlighting exactly which County in England the products are made, said Annie. "This includes silver jewellery from Warwickshire and up-cycled jewellery from Leicestershire. There is an English made toiletries collection presented in William Morris designed packaging, and the most delicious tinned biscuit collection made in Yorkshire". And with the Aviva cycle tour about to hit town, it seems appropriate that even the 1940's bike outside the shop was made in England, and the saddle even closer to home, in Coventry. Whilst the shop has been open less than two weeks, initial reactions from locals and visitors seem good.

Annie concluded: " It has been an encouraging start, we are delighted to be a part of the retail mix in Stratford upon Avon".



NUTS MAKE IT A HENLEY STREET TRIO

To complete a trio of new businesses on Henley Street...tomorrow (Thursday) sees the opening of a nut roaster on the road.

Nuts in ya Mouth (NIYM) is the brain-child of award-winning Michelin Guide listed chef Martyn Brook from Shottery and partner Mais Lindberg. Martyn has created a range of roasted nuts and breakfast cereals which are healthy and free of artificial colourings, flavourings and preservatives after changing his diet following a brush with colon cancer.

The nuts are imported from around the world and roasted on site in Henley Street. Martyn and his team then turn them into 100 % organic products. These are available to try and buy in store and are already proving particularly popular with hotels and pubs. In addition, NIYM has also taken a popular Scandinavian breakfast granola and developed it for the UK market.

The Stratford shop is being designed as the first and the prototype of a nationwide franchise of Nuts in ya Mouth Shops and Roasters.

Martyn said: "We hope NIYM will soon be a place where both tourists and locals can come in and smell, taste and take away freshly roasted nuts, from both our existing product range as well as new inspirations of our nutty nut roaster professionals and at the same time, pick up a bag of premium **and exclusively selected coffee beans with an attitude.**"

Future product lines planned include: nut butters, made in store, with different flavours such as almond or cashew; chocolate coated nuts and chocolate coated coffee beans; our own ice cream and fudge.



Town Centre - Performance Data

Wi-Fi users during the last week were predominantly from Stratford with the majority being Female. We had international visitors log on from Hong Kong, Sweden and Iowa America. The busiest day for people logging into Wi-Fi was Saturday 23rd April.

Apologies but due to a technical fault footfall figures are not available today.

We will either issue them in next weeks newsletter or send them separately.

Apologies for any inconvenience.

Do you Have Designs on Shakespeare?

Stratford businesses, their staff, families and friends are all being invited to take part in a competition to design a housewarming card to mark the re-opening of Shakespeare's New Place in July.

New Place in Chapel Street is being revamped by BID member The Shakespeare's Birthplace Trust as part of the Shakespeare 400th anniversary celebrations this year. It will reopen at mid-day on 1 July.

Shakespeare's New Place was his family home from 1597 until he died in the house in 1616. When Shakespeare bought New Place he was an established playwright and it is believed that he wrote his later plays there, including *The Tempest*.

The house was demolished in 1759 but once re-opened visitors **to New Place will be able to follow in Shakespeare's footsteps** through a new entrance on the site of the original gatehouse and enjoy a contemporary landscape of a new garden that reveals the footprint of the Shakespeare family home. The re-imagined site gives an impression of the scale of New Place and relationship to the surrounding buildings; such as the neighbouring King Edward VI School and Guild Chapel that were once attended by a young Shakespeare.

Commissioned artworks and displays throughout the site will evoke a sense of family life and hint at **Shakespeare's major works that were written during the 19 years he owned New Place.**

Shortlisted entries to the housewarming card competition will form part of an exhibition at the site.

There are three categories for the contest:

- Under 11
- 12 to 16
- over 16

Designs for the card - A5 portrait - can be submitted via:

1. Send a photo to competition@shakespeare.org.uk or
2. Post to

New Place Competition, Marketing,
The Shakespeare Birthplace Trust,
Henley Street,
Stratford upon Avon
CV37 6QW

Please include your name, age, email address and telephone number

The competition ends on 12 June

Prizes include Annual Family Passes for the Shakespeare Family Homes and Shakespeare goodies.



AVIVIA WOMEN'S TOUR - Stratford members Urged to Get into Shape for Cycle Tour Day

Stratford businesses are being urged to plan ahead for town centre road closures and parking restrictions when the Aviva Women's Tour arrives in town next month.

This world class race - featuring some of the finest female athletes on the planet - will hit town on the afternoon of Thursday 16 June. It is the first time this prestigious event has been to Stratford and thousands of followers are likely to descend on the town and the Bridge Street finish line at the end of the second day of the gruelling competition

Stratford Events Manager Ruth Wood said:

"Our members are used to roads in the town centre being shut for various key events in the year including the Shakespeare Celebrations, Motoring Festival and Food Festival.

"However, this is a first and things are bound to be a little different. Also, being a weekday and during a busy summer month for the town will only add to the complications.

"I would urge all our members to take a look at the planned parking and road closure schedules and plan accordingly - not just for staff to get to work but also for deliveries."

She added:

"There is bound to be some inconvenience for members, but I hope everyone will see the value of this world-famous event particularly with the media attention it brings."

DO YOU HAVE A PLAN TO MARK THE AVIVA WOMAN'S TOUR COMING TO STRATFORD. ARE YOU A CAFE, HOTEL OR RESTAURANT PLANNING TO OPEN EARLY TO CATER FOR THE CROWDS EXPECTED OR DESIGNING A SPECIAL PRODUCT OR MENU. ARE YOU A SHOP PLANNING TO DO A SPECIAL WINDOW DISPLAY.

PLEASE LET US KNOW YOUR IDEAS SO WE CAN FEATURE YOU IN THE COMING WEEKS



PROVISIONAL

Road Closures and Parking Restrictions on 16th June

<u>Roads Affected</u>	<u>Dates & Times</u>
Bridge Street – between Bridge Foot and Wood Street	04.45hrs To 18.00hrs
High Street – between Sheep Street and Bridge Street	04.45hrs - 18.00hrs
Sheep Street – between Waterside and High Street	04.45hrs - 18.00hrs
Waterside between Bridge Street and Chapel Lane	04.45hrs - 18.00hrs
Bridgefoot/Clopton Bridge	<u>tbc</u>
Shipston Road between the junction with Seven Meadows Road and Banbury Road	11.00hrs – 16.00hrs
Wood Street from Meer Street to Bridge Street	13.00hrs – 16.00hrs
Henley Street between Bridge Street and Meer Street	13.00hrs – 16.00hrs
Union Street between Bridge Street and Guild Street	13.00hrs – 16.00hrs

The road closure proposals on 16th June 2016 are as follows:

The planned parking restrictions on 16th June 2016 are as follows:

No Parking in the following roads:

Shipston Road,
Bridge Street,
High Street,
Sheep Street,
Waterside
Banbury Road (outside The Swans Nest Hotel)



BID Member Spotlight - For Something Different

For Something Different is a friendly family-run business situated on Meer Street. We've been trading for nearly twenty years, first under the name Garden Images and then under our current name. We've stayed true to our green-fingered roots, selling a small selection of gardening equipment and ornaments, and over the years we have added a few more strings to our bow.

We pride ourselves on offering a unique shopping experience; whether you're searching for a gift for a loved one or looking to treat yourself, we've got you covered. Our stock ranges from quality Italian leather handbags and silver and pearl jewellery, to humorous greetings cards and mugs, to scarves, ponchos and other apparel, and many more things besides!

And we're not just confined to Meer Street – every summer we exhibit at the prestigious Chelsea Flower Show, and at Christmas time we can be found spreading festive cheer down at the Christmas Market on Bridge Street.

Whatever you're looking for, our welcoming and knowledgeable staff will be on hand to point you in the right direction. Nothing is too big an ask; we'll help you to find something just a little bit different!

Customer Reviews

*"This shop is amazing. Lovely gifts and quality stuff. The shopkeepers made us feel so welcome... thanks for the great service."
"I paid a visit to this lovely little shop today and I wasn't disappointed. Wonderful choice of stock, a lovely lady served me and excellent value."*

"Looked around the whole of Stratford and went back to this shop because it was so great! Shame I'm 120 miles away from it as I would always be in it!!"



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
Sandi
01789 292718

Events & Finance
Ruth, Tor & Pauline
01789 299011

Town Host
Dianne
01789 268291
07879 361735

info@stratforward.co.uk

Visit us on the web at
www.stratforward.co.uk

Our profile page is an opportunity for you to promote your business. Send up to 400 words on your business – including a few quotes if possible – together with two or three pictures and we will try and use it in one of our weekly newsletters over the next few months.

Email Addresses - Please contact the Stratforward office to provide us with the best email address and point of contact for your business.