

BUSINESS NEWS

Stratforward Newsletter

Issue 45 - 17 November 2016

Stratford Set To Sparkle For The Festive Season

The countdown to Christmas is on.....with Stratford's spectacular lights set to be switched on next week.

The lights - regarded by many as one of the best "shows" in the country attracting thousands of people into the town over the festive period - will be officially turned on next Thursday (November 24th).

The switching on ceremony, which traditionally attracts hundreds of local families, will as usual centre around the Town Hall. The event will start at 4pm with carols by the choir of Thomas Jolyffe School, accompanied by the Kings Brass. This will be followed by an appearance on the Town Hall balcony from dignitaries, including Stratford Mayor, Cllr Juliet Short.

Just before 4.30pm there will be a countdown from BBC Coventry & Warwickshire's Vic Minett before the lights are switched on.

This year one lucky young person will get the chance to help the Mayor do the switch-on. The Stratford Herald has teamed up with Stratford Town Council to find a youngster deserving of the honour. It's not too late to nominate someone - maybe someone who cares for an ill relative or who works tirelessly for their community, or has had a particularly difficult time - but be quick, the deadline is today (Thursday 17th)

Shortly after the big switch-on, crowds will hear the jingle of sleigh bells followed by an appearance from Father Christmas himself on the balcony.

After this, the Mayor and Civic Party will leave the Town Hall and parade down High Street to officially turn on the Tree of Light at the top of Bridge Street. The parade will this year



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be led by the Shakespeare Morris Men. The party will then tour the Christmas Market. Meanwhile, back at the Town Hall children will get the chance to meet Santa.

Road Closures for Markets and Switch ons

Businesses are reminded that various road closures will be in place on Thursday affecting Bridge Street, Wood Street, High Street, Chapel Street and Sheep Street to allow for the Christmas Market and lights switch on. If your business is on one of these streets, this may affect your loading, deliveries and waste collections.

Thursday, Thursday, Thursday ...Christmas Markets, Late Night Shopping and Free Car Parking To Make Thursday Key For Shoppers

The official switch-on of **Stratford's Christmas lights next week** marks the first of five special 'Shoppers Specials' on each of the Thursdays in the run up to Christmas.

At the centre of the offer - aimed at encouraging shoppers into the town to do their Christmas shopping - will be the popular Christmas markets on Bridge Street.

The Stratford upon Avon Christmas Markets will take place on each of the Thursdays up to Christmas - November 24th, then December 1st, 8th, 15th and 22nd.

Open from 10am to 8pm, the Markets will include a range of stalls selling anything from traditional and seasonal gifts to crafts and handmade and homemade items. Artwork and bespoke decorations will also be on offer, along with Christmas candles, and vintage, fairtrade and ethnic products.

Food and drink and entertainment - including carol singing, meet the market snowman and stilt walkers - will add to the festive fun.

And to encourage shoppers to come in after work a special "Twilight Thursdays" package has been created with the Market, late night opening of shops and free parking (restrictions apply) on each of the Thursdays.

Message from Joe Baconnet, BID Director

A big THANK YOU to all the businesses on Henley Street who have responded about late night opening and in particular the switch on evening. **It's a great example of a number of the businesses getting their heads together** and working to create something consistent.

Businesses such as Magic Alley, Bright Ideas, Compton and Clarke, Nuts in Ya Mouth, Vinology, Bensons, Bensons House of Tea, Fine & Dandy, Traditions of Britain, Timeless Tales, Nutcracker Christmas Shop, & Boston Tea Party will all be entering into the spirit of the party and staying open late on the switch on evening. **Magic Alley will be celebrating the start of Father Christmas's residence and have some of his reindeer outside in Henley Street.** Other businesses are celebrating with mulled wine for customers and music and general merriment and celebration.

If you're opening, let us know, we will make sure that we add you to the website.

A number of BID businesses are also taking stalls on the Christmas Market – including Hotter (yes, they are on Bridge Street, but they really do benefit from taking part), For Something Different (from Meer Street), Shabby Chic's Sister (from The Minories), Roly's Fudge (High Street), Cox's Yard and others.

We've got our fingers crossed for you all for good weather for the evening.

The District Council have confirmed that Free parking is available every Thursday from November 24th from 4pm to midnight in all SDC Pay and Display car parks, including Thursday, December 22nd.

Christmas On Avon - Showcasing Stratford As Festive Destination For Shopping and Fun

The official Stratford Christmas Brochure - Christmas On Avon - is now hitting doorsteps throughout the region showcasing the town as a great destination for Christmas preparations and celebrations.

The brochure, put together by Stratforward, features details of what's on in Stratford this festive season - including a full listing of BID businesses to answer everyone's questions about where to buy gifts.

The brochure highlights the best of Stratford with businesses featured on themed pages covering categories of: Him, Her, Children, Wine & Dine, Stocking Fillers and Home. It also lists all BID businesses who fall under the categories of: stay, wine & dine and shop.

A total of 75,000 copies have been printed, with 69,000 being distributed with local free papers over the coming days and 6,000 set to be handed out around town. [Call the team at Stratforward if you need any!](#)

To see a digital version of the brochure, [please visit www.christmasuponavon.co.uk](http://www.christmasuponavon.co.uk).

And for ideas of where to buy gifts in Stratford, the Stratforward website has a full listing of places with complete with phone numbers: <http://www.stratforward.co.uk/events/christmas-upon-avon/christmas-gifts-in-stratford>

It's our Oooops moment. We're really sorry, our Christmas Elves got carried away and promised fireworks at the Switch-On in our 2016 Christmas upon Avon guide. There won't be fireworks, but we are told it will snow. Rudolph finally admitted he doesn't like loud noises! We look forward to seeing you all on the 24th. Chief Christmas Elf.



Tor Wilkes - Stratforward

Christmas Windows Sparkle As Competition Hots Up

A huge thanks to all the businesses who have brought some 'festive sparkle' to their windows for the Stratforward Christmas Window competition.

All businesses in the town centre with street-facing windows are automatically entered into the free competition.

Entrants are in with the chance of winning a trophy and certificate, but also the chance to showcase their business in some of the busiest weeks leading up to Christmas, as we will share the results of the competition to local media as well as on our website and social media channels.

There are two categories, independent and national, and judging of each display will be based on three criteria: overall impact, traditional style and effort involved.

Judging will take place in early December and the winners will be notified and revealed on Wednesday, December 14th.



The Father Christmas Residency on Henley Street

**VISIT THE REAL
FATHER CHRISTMAS**

**FROM NOVEMBER 24TH UNTIL CHRISTMAS EVE
AND EXPERIENCE THE MAGIC FOR YOURSELVES**

**MIRACLE
on MAGIC ALLEY**

Magic Alley, 21 Henley Street, Stratford CV37 6QW
BOOKING ESSENTIAL TO AVOID DISAPPOINTMENT

01789 290969

www.SeekTheMagic.org/Christmas

On Thursday 24th November, Father Christmas will take up residence in Henley Street until Christmas Eve. The man himself will be at Magic Alley, which is being transformed into a winter wonderland of magic for the festive season.

Pippin the elf and his magical helpers will transform the whole building into a snow-covered winter wonderland called 'Miracle on Magic Alley' which promises to be a spectacular Christmas experience for the whole family.

Father Christmas himself will arrive at Magic Alley on the 24th, to be joined by two of his reindeer in a 'flying visit' between 4.30pm and 6.30pm. There will be twinkling lights, icicles and snow throughout the attraction, and apparently "more than just a nod towards a certain magical land through a wardrobe".

Everyone that visits Father Christmas will receive a specially-commissioned story to be

read together as a family on Christmas Eve, and every child will be given their own Sleigh Bell!!

To book tickets call 01789 290969 and to find more information visit:

www.seekthemagic.org/Christmas

The Stratford Herald & El Greco “win a Christmas Party competition”.

BID member, El Greco, teamed up with The Stratford Herald in a competition for readers to win a Christmas Party package for up to 10 people (it's worth £400). The Herald have extended the dead-line until noon tomorrow (Thursday) to give BID newsletter readers a last chance to enter. Entry forms are in the Stratford Herald dated November 10th. Good Luck if you enter!

El Greco's Xmas Party Nights are running every night from Thursday 1st until Friday 23rd December. In addition - with retail and healthcare workers in mind - it is once again offering its popular "Better Late Than Never Xmas Parties" throughout January for those simply too busy, exhausted and broke to party in December.

Promoting your business - Stratford Herald Competitions.

The Editor of The Herald, Amanda Chalmers, is looking for BID members who would like to offer prizes (valued at over £250) for competitions in the run in to Christmas. If you're thinking about doing this (and it is great marketing) then please give her a ring on 01789 266261.

Don't forget to let the BID know if you do run a competition with The Herald so we can let all BID members know.

Stratford Gets Christmassy

An array of activities are on offer from our BID members and partner organisations through the festive season. From pantomimes and productions to activities and workshops, there is plenty to entertain families in Stratford in the run-up to Christmas.

Here are some of the activities on offer:-

RSC

This winter sees the RSC's revolutionary production of *The Tempest*, featuring state-of-the-art technology, to mark Shakespeare's 400th anniversary, running in the Royal Shakespeare Theatre until January 21st.



The RSC is also inviting families to create star-shaped willow lanterns and take part in a festive winter procession followed by a ceilidh as part of its Winter's Night family activities this December.



Photo courtesy of RSC

People taking part in the free procession, which starts at the Bancroft Terrace on at 6pm Saturday, December 3rd can create willow lanterns at one of three workshops set to take place this Saturday (November 19th), next Saturday (26th) and the following week (December 3rd) from 2pm-5pm at The Other Place.

The procession is followed by a festive ceillidh in the Studio Theatre at The Other Place with music, hot dogs and festive punch will also be on offer. The lanterns will then be on display in the foyer area of The Other Place together with a shadow box, which reflects silhouettes of winter trees and birds, which will light up the theatre space over December and the New Year.

Other events taking place at the RSC during December include Harriet Walter in conversation about her new book, Brutus and Other Heroines, with RSC Artistic Director Gregory Doran. The talk takes place on Monday, December 19th from 5pm-5.45pm in the Swan Theatre.

For more information on any events, visit www.rsc.org.uk



Shakespeare's Birthplace

There are a range of activities on offer at Shakespeare's Birthplace this festive season, with its 'A Very Tudor Christmas' event from December until January 6th, including making Tudor Christmas cards to talks about Christmas in the Tudor period as well as storytelling.



Shakespeare's New Place will be turned into a Garden of Curious A-MUSE-ments from December 15-17th, followed by Ruff Making activities from December 17th to January 2nd.

And at Hall's Croft, from December 1st to January 6th visitors will be able to discover how Christmas has changed in the 400 years since the Halls lived there.

For more information visit <https://www.shakespeare.org.uk/visit/shakespeares-birthplace/>

Stratford Arts House

Get into the Christmas spirit with performances at the Arts House. You can start the Christmas season with Stratford Concert Band on December 3rd 's popular local wind band. The ever popular 'Christmas Nights' from Wilson Roberts' Friends on Sunday, December 11th, as well as a Prelude to Christmas from Stratford Choral Society on December 17th.

No festive season would be complete without a panto. This year Aladdin will fly into the Arts House, with performances at various times from Wednesday, December 14th until Tuesday, December 27th.

For more information visit <http://stratfordartshouse.co.uk/>



Attic Theatre

Panto is also on offer at the Attic Theatre in Cox's Yard, with Beauty and the Beast running from December 16th until January 8th featuring the Prince of Stratfordia. Visit <http://www.theattictheatre.co.uk/> for more information



Escape Arts

Community arts group Escape Arts is running a range of creative Christmas activities at The Old Slaughterhouse from Christmas art camps to a late-night shopping service. Children will be able to take part in activities like creating their own Christmas gifts or making a winter wonderland with igloos and icicles.

There is also a four-week Lego Animation Club starting this Saturday.

The charity is also offering craft workshops including traditional Christmas crafts like sugarcraft, willow angels and Christmas stockings. For more information visit <http://www.escapearts.org.uk/>

Stratford Town Walk

The popular Stratford Town Walk continues over the festive season - even on Christmas Day. The award-winning guided walking tour with local professional guides meets on weekdays at 11am and Saturday and Sunday at 11am and 2pm. On Christmas Day a festive walk starts at 10.30am lasting roughly two hours.

It takes in the houses connected to William Shakespeare and his family, including The Birthplace, Nash's House, New Place, Hall's Croft, as well as the River Avon, Royal Shakespeare Theatres, and Guild Chapel.



ARE YOU A BID BUSINESS WITH SOMETHING SPECIAL HAPPENING FOR XMAS - DO LET US KNOW SO WE CAN FEATURE IN FUTURE NEWSLETTERS

New Occupiers Announced for Bell Court

UK & European, the developers of Bell Court, have announced that they have completed two more deals for the site opening spring 2017.

Miller & Carter steakhouse and All Bar One have confirmed that they will be opening at the £30m Bell Court redevelopment.

Known for its steaks, Miller & Carter has signed a 25 year deal for a 5,000 sq ft restaurant that will cater for up to 200 diners, with additional seating outside. The restaurant will have a prime position, located on the ground floor below the new Everyman cinema.

All Bar One will join Miller & Carter with a 4,000 sq ft restaurant that will open out onto the central courtyard at the development. Arranged over the ground and first floor, the bar will also have an outdoor dining area and will cater for approximately 110 people in total.

These two new openings join Byron Burgers and Everyman Cinemas as confirmed occupiers.

John Stacey, Asset Management Director at UK & European Investments, said: "I'm delighted to announce that both Miller & Carter and All Bar One will be joining the development and opening their first restaurants in Stratford-upon-Avon.

"Restaurants and bars such as these will ensure Bell Court is a thriving leisure destination that operates throughout the day and into the evening. When complete, Bell Court will be a desirable place; attractive to both visitors and residents looking for somewhere to enjoy their spare time.

Joe Baconnet, BID Director, said "UK & European are taking a very cautious approach to their lettings and they are at pains to point out that they will wait for the right businesses to come along to ensure that Bell Court is an asset to the town for a lot of years to come."

Can we also recommend that you have a look at the time lapse videos of the development in progress... **It's a great watch and it shows how much it rained this year!!** <http://ukandeuropean.reachtimelapse.co.uk/bellcourt/timelapse.php>

More in next weeks newsletter....

Special Offer For BID Members At New Boutique Hotel

A new boutique hotel - sister to the well-established Arden Hotel - has launched in Stratford, along with a special offer for BID members. Arden House, a 10-bedroom boutique property, is just around the corner from the Royal Shakespeare Theatre and aims to create a home-from-home atmosphere, with dedicated 'house hosts' offering 24-hour service, as well as a chef to prepare breakfast, afternoon tea and 'gin o'clock' for guests (included in the price), all of whom are invited to gather around an informal dining table.



Drinks and a well-stocked pantry of help-yourself snacks are included, and guests can choose a complimentary tittle from the specified house drinks list, including wines and spirits.

Mark Chambers, Managing Director at Eden Hotel Collection, said: "Guests are increasingly looking to stay in hotels which offer exceptional personal service and greater flexibility, where they are treated as a person rather than a number.

"This dovetails with a move

away from more structured hotel environments to those with a laid-back atmosphere, with more fluidity and choice for guests.

"Our primary aim at Arden House is to deliver a relaxed and unstuffy experience, perhaps more akin to staying with friends than a formal hotel environment."



The refurbishment of the property was handled by Eden's in-house team, headed by Design Director Marian Cartter and the interior includes designs by Osborne & Little/Matthew Williamson and GP & J Baker. The tables and cabinets are bespoke, and some of the furniture was sourced from Oka.

An overnight stay costs from £229 per room (two sharing), including breakfast, afternoon tea, alcoholic drinks from the house drinks list, soft drinks, snacks from the pantry and 24-hour house host service.

But BID members can take advantage of a special opening offer at exclusive rates from £169 per room, based on two sharing.

The booking period for this offer only runs until Sunday (November 20) but is valid for stays from November until March (excluding Christmas and New Year), so get in quickly. Terms and conditions apply and the offer is subject to availability.



To book call 01789 298682 or visit <https://www.yourreservation.net/tb3/index.cfm?>



Project Griffin - last call to Book

The latest round of Project Griffin events - raising awareness of how businesses can work with the police to combat crime and terrorism - return to Stratford next week.

Any BID member can attend the events, hosted by the Birthplace Trust, on Tuesday (November 22nd) from 10am-12pm and Wednesday (November 23rd).

Project Griffin, a Home Office-funded initiative in West Mercia and Warwickshire Police, aims to encourage members of the business community to work in partnership with the police to detect and deter terrorist activity and crime.

This includes: raising awareness of current terrorist and crime issues; sharing and gathering intelligence and information; building and maintaining effective working relationships; looking for solutions to defeat terrorism and crime; maintaining trust and confidence in the police and other authorities; and empowering people to report suspicious activity and behaviour.

The main strand of Project Griffin focuses on the police sharing information with key trusted partners in the **community through 'Awareness Events' which cover such as the current threat level, hostile reconnaissance, suspicious items and behaviour and firearms incidents**, as well as providing an awareness of the impact and disruption that may be caused by such an incident.

The aim is to work with people who are involved in some way with the safety and security of a building, business or area and to empower them to recognise and report suspicious activity and behaviour to the police. These staff could range from security to front of house reception staff.

The Project Griffin events are free for BID members to attend. HR@shakespeare.org.uk



Dates for your diary!

19th October to 14th December - Charity Christmas Card sale at The United Reformed Church

24th October to 30th November - Stratford Autumn Literary Festival

22nd November - Explore Your Archive at The Shakespeare Centre

22nd & 23rd November - Project Griffin at the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust

24th November - American Thanksgiving at Harvard House

24th November - Christmas Light Switch On and Celebrations including Christmas Market

24th November to 24th December - Father Christmas at the Magic Alley, Henley Street

1st December - Christmas Market

1st December to 6th January 2017 - **A Very Tudor Christmas at Anne Hathaway's Cottage**

2nd to 10th December - Toad of Toad Hall at Bear Pit Theatre

3rd December - Small Business Saturday

3rd & 4th December - **Victorian Advent Weekend Anne Hathaway's Cottage**

6th December - Orchestra of the Swan at The Arts House

8th December - Christmas Market

10th December - Shakespeare Hospice Santa Fun Run

14th December - Christmas Window Competition winners revealed

15th December - Christmas Market

15th December - Lions Christmas Carol Service in Bridge Street

15th to 17th December - Garden of Curious A-Muse-ments at Shakespeare's New Place

16th to 28th December - Beauty and the Beast at The Attic Theatre

17th December to 3rd January 2017 - Warwickshire Schools Christmas holiday

17th to 23rd December - **Tudor Christmas Talk Shakespeare's Birthplace**

22nd December - Christmas Market

28th December to 31st January - Meet the Scrooges at the Enchanted Manor, Henley Street

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

Stratforward
10-11 Sheep Street
Stratford-upon-Avon

Main Line
Joseph & Sandi
01789 292718

Events & Finance
Ruth, Tor & Pauline
01789 299011

Town Hosts
01789 268291

info@stratforward.co.uk

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