



**WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL**



**Wokingham
Town Council**

1 December 2017

Dear Colleague

It's been just over a month since we updated you on the actions we took after our positive session in October.

We wanted to say a big thank you to those who supported the recent Love Wokingham People and Personalities Campaign, which has been positively received. In the first week alone, we had 15,000 impacts across all social media channels; the Love Wokingham Facebook page generated the most volumes of shares and likes. Following the success of this campaign, we'll be looking to develop a longer-term and wider marketing strategy with the Wokingham Business Association, which we'll tell you more about in due course.

Since our meeting in October, we've been reviewing all the suggestions raised to see what we else we can implement.

Here's a quick update on our progress:

Communication

We recognise communication is such a critical issue and we're committed to doing our very best to get this right. We're pleased to be working directly with the Wokingham Business Association, which is sharing information directly with its members. Thank you also to everyone for forwarding to your own relevant organisations.

You said you preferred separate updates about individual projects rather than a single town-wide newsletter. So we'll carry on producing information in this way. You want to receive things at a regular point, and this is already in place for the Market Place newsletter so we'll continue with this approach.

A few of you requested hard copies of these to have available for your customers and we're happy to arrange this – please email: jnowecki@wokingham-tc.gov.uk It's also not too late to sign up for the e-newsletters for regular updates. To sign up, please contact Jan Nowecki (as above for Market Place) and towncentre.regeneration@wokingham.gov.uk (for details on Peach Place, Elms Field and Carnival Phase 2 redevelopment)

You also requested more frequent information about what is happening on the ground at Market Place, so we've now introduced a weekly schedule update sent to you on Fridays, ready for the

coming week. We hope you're finding this helpful. Balfour Beatty continues to talk directly with businesses if something in particular is likely to affect them.

As suggested, a dedicated phone number has now been introduced to help deliveries if they are a problem. The number is **XXXXXXX**.

Advertising your events

The Borough Council has an events section on its website – visit www.wokingham.gov.uk and search for ‘news and events’. Once in this section, you can add your event by visiting the ‘What’s on’ area.

Positive marketing campaign: short-term

In addition to the Love Wokingham People and Personalities campaign, we continue to work together on a range of actions to promote the town in the lead up to Christmas. Here are some of the things happening during the next few weeks:

- ‘Keep it local this Christmas’ campaign – free family events, including site open days at Peach Place, in the town centre on Saturday 2 December
- Living Advent Calendar
- #wokypresents social media campaign
- Continue to work with the Wokingham Paper to help promote the town
- On behalf of The Wokingham Business Association, Specsavers is organising a Christmas ‘Scavenger Hunt’ to attract families into local retailers and businesses with plenty of prizes available

In the longer-term we'll further develop the Love Wokingham brand. This will be key to developing our wider-marketing strategy for the town and we will continue to work with the Wokingham Business Association. This will look at the feasibility of pop-up shops, events such as Twilight markets, and a visitor App.

Car parking

The Borough Council has announced free car parking in its car parks across the whole Borough, including Wokingham town centre, on the Saturdays and Sundays leading up to Christmas (9, 10, 16, 17, 23 and 24 December).

A number of you also requested free parking 24/7 but unfortunately this isn't possible at this time. Wokingham Borough Council is the lowest funded unitary authority, and such schemes would have a massive impact on the frontline services on which our residents rely.

However, we've been able to offer an alternative parking scheme to help the important pre-Christmas and New Year sales period. ‘Free after Three’ in Wokingham town centre car parks (from 3pm to 8am the next day,) runs until the end of January.

We're also currently exploring printed shopping discounts or promotions, on car parking tickets. If it is technically possible to do this, we'll talk to the Business Association to ascertain interest from retailers.

We're also reviewing car park signage in the town centre to see what's in place, and if any additional signs are needed.

In October, Civil Parking Enforcement was introduced, which helps us ensure safe and legal parking throughout the Wokingham Borough. We're pleased to report this is already freeing up existing 30 minute car parking spaces in the town centre.

Other suggestions from the meeting in October include driver information signs and 'pay on exit' at our car parks – all of which would require significant investment. But we'll look at these as part of our new Parking Strategy, currently being drafted.

Roadworks

You also talked about us having a roadworks map in the town centre. Sadly this isn't feasible, as information changes too quickly and the maps would instantly be out of date. However, all the information is available on www.roadworks.org. This is the best place to keep up-to-date about road closures, temporary lights, incidents and traffic. From your smart phone, tablet or computer you can find it via our website (www.wokingham.gov.uk) in the 'current roadworks' section. You can see why work is being done, and by whom. You can also get current information, as well as future dates set by you in the search box. We'll soon be relaunching our campaign to promote this site.

Traffic management

We received a few suggestions concerning roads in the town. The first was about traffic calming measures on Rose Street, and we are in the process of drawing up plans to move the existing traffic island, which will be considered by councillors soon. We also know there is some support for keeping Luckley Path closed on a permanent basis. For legal reasons, we must consult with local residents so we're currently investigating if this is possible.

Wayfinding Strategy

Signing and Wayfinding helps people to navigate and orientate themselves more easily around the built environment. Orientation is not just about signage; it includes other factors, such as landmark buildings, architecture and historical references. Our concept for the town will involve new signs, heads up displays with landmark references and interactive mapping that will be available on the My Journey Wokingham website at: <http://www.myjourneywokingham.com/>

Many of the comments you raised was around improving signage, interactive maps and advertising signs – all things we'll look at as part of the Wayfinding Strategy.

Thank you

Thank you again for your valuable support and patience during this particularly difficult time. We continue to recognise the disruption, and how it affects businesses and residents alike. Please continue to talk to us and let us know ideas, suggestions or concerns, and we'll do all we can to look into them and act upon them if it's possible.

With best wishes

Clr Charlotte Haitham Taylor

Leader, Wokingham Borough Council

Clr Peter Lucey

**Mayor & Chairman of Market Place Working Party,
Wokingham Town Council**

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